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THE Catholic Mind

49TH YEAR
OF PUBLICATION

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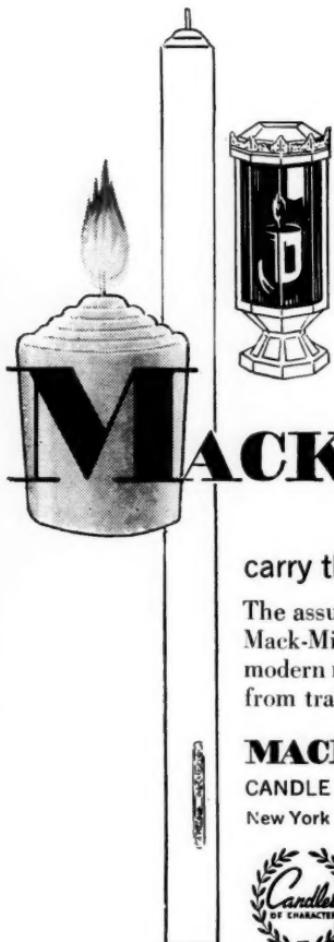
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THE Catholic Mind

VOL. XLIX

JANUARY, 1951

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Assumption Prayer

Composed by His Holiness, Pope Pius XII

O IMMACULATE VIRGIN, Mother of God and Mother of Men. We believe with all the fervor of our Faith in your triumphal Assumption, both in body and soul, into Heaven, where you are acclaimed as Queen by all the choirs of Angels and all the legions of the Saints; and we unite with them to praise and bless the Lord Who has exalted you above all other pure creatures, and to offer you the tribute of our devotion and our love.

We know that your gaze, which on earth watched over the humble and suffering humanity of Jesus, in Heaven is filled with the vision of that Humanity glorified, and with the vision of uncreated Wisdom, and that the joy of your soul in the direct contemplation of the adorable Trinity causes your heart to throb with overwhelming tenderness.

And we, poor sinners, whose body weighs down the flight of the soul, beg you to purify our hearts so that, while we remain here below, we may learn to see God and God alone in the beauties of His creatures.

We trust that your merciful eyes may deign to glance down upon our miseries and our sorrows, upon our struggles and our weaknesses; that your countenance may smile upon our joys and our victories; that you may hear the voice of Jesus saying to you of each one of us, as He once said to you of His beloved disciple: behold thy son.

And we, who call upon you as our Mother, we, like John, take you as the guide, strength and consolation of our mortal life.

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We are inspired by the certainty that your eyes, which wept over the earth watered by the blood of Jesus, are yet turned toward this world, held in the clutches of wars, persecutions, oppression of the just and the weak. And from the shadows of this vale of tears, we seek in your Heavenly assistance and tender mercy, comfort for our aching hearts and help in the trials of the Church and of our fatherland.

We believe, finally, that in the glory where you reign, clothed with the sun and crowned with the stars, you are, after Jesus, the joy and gladness of all the Angels and of all the Saints. And from this earth, over which we tread as pilgrims, comforted by our faith in future resurrection, we look to you, our life, our sweetness and our hope; draw us onward with the sweetness of your voice that one day, after our exile, you may show us Jesus, the Blessed Fruit of your womb, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet virgin Mary.



Religion and Law

Too many American lawyers are shockingly and tragically ignorant of the fact that the moral law and religion constitute the basis of our legal system. This ignorance of the inextricable relationship between religion and American law is particularly noticeable among lawyers who have graduated from law school in the last twenty-five years. These lawyers forget or ignore the principles of the moral law and religion insisted on by Blackstone, the father of our legal system, and in the Declaration of Independence.

Strictly speaking, there can be no such thing as a purely secular study of law in the United States. Religion is a major component of our legal blood stream. Thus, legal ethics, which we have frequently regarded as a mere branch of the law, is really the warp and woof of our entire legal fabric.

From man's inherent equality before God, the American democratic doctrine of equality before the law is a natural and inescapable deduction. It must be forever remembered that without the first doctrine the second becomes meaningless.—*Dr. Clarence E. Manion, Dean, Notre Dame Law School.*

The Assumption in the Mind of the Universal Church

THE EDITORS

*Reprinted from the TABLET**

MANY people who are not Catholics, commenting on the announcement of the forthcoming definition of the dogma of the Assumption, have said that their chief surprise was to find that this was something not defined as a dogma long ago, so used have they become to seeing churches and religious Orders dedicated to the Assumption, and to finding the feast of the Assumption celebrated in a very magnificent manner in Catholic churches all over the world.¹ The *Osservatore Romano* has been showing how the Holy Father, in deciding to proclaim the dogma, is acquiescing in the insistent petition of the Bishops and faithful all over the world, as urgently expressed for a long time past. It recently carried a recapitulation, signed by Fr. Wilhelm Henrich, S.J., one of the *Qualificatori* of the Holy Office, of the manner in which,

through the last hundred years, the voice of the Church has begged for this step, as something following from and bound up with the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.²

The two first petitions to reach Pius IX came, in 1849, from the Cardinal Bishop of Malines, in Belgium, and the Bishop of Osma, in Spain, as riders to their replies to the inquiry about the definition of the Immaculate Conception. The story of this earlier part of the movement of petitions has been written fully by Fr. Henrich,³ telling of that made by Queen Isabella II of Spain on December 27th, 1863, at the instance, as was recalled in these pages last week, of her confessor, St. Antonio-Maria Claret, one of the saints canonized in the present Holy Year; of the *postulatum* of some two hundred of the Fathers at the Vatican Council; of the revival of the movement

¹ It was under the title of her Assumption that Pius XI in 1922 declared and confirmed Our Lady to be the principal patroness of France.

² *Osservatore Romano*, 16-17 Agosto, 1950.

³ *Historia motus pro Assumptione . . . definienda annis 1863-1940 orti, in Petitiones de Assumptione . . . definienda . . .*; Vol. II, pp. 880-1057.

* 128 Sloane St., London, S.W.1, England, Aug. 26, 1950.

in France at the beginning of this century; of the desire expressed by the great International Marian Congresses of 1900 to 1912; and of the spread of this movement throughout the world in the years 1921 to 1939.⁴

DOCUMENTATION

All this story is related and documented in the two volumes, of more than two thousand pages, of the *Petitiones de Assumptione corporea B.V. Mariae in Caelum definienda ad S. Sedem delatae, propositae secundum ordinem hierarchicum, dogmaticum, geographicum, chronologicum, ad consensum Ecclesiae manifestandum*, which Fr. Henrich published, five years ago, with the special permission of Pius XII and with the collaboration of his colleague in the archives of the Holy Office, Fr. Rudolf de Moos, S.J. As this compilation records, between 1849 and 1940 there were received by the Holy See spontaneous petitions from 1,332 residential Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops of the Universal Church, occupying 820 Sees, or about 73 per cent of the Sees of the whole Church; from twenty-six Abbots and Prelates *Nullius*; from 261 Vicars Apostolic in 219 Vicariates, or about 81 per cent of all the Vicariates of the world; from sixty-one Superiors General of

fifty religious Orders; and from thirty-nine Theological Faculties and Major Seminaries. Including the titular Bishops, there were received altogether from the Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops, no fewer than 2,505 petitions. Collectively, the Bishops sent their spontaneous petitions from two National Plenary Councils, five Provincial Councils, eight diocesan Synods, twenty-five National or Regional Episcopal Councils, and thirty-six Marian Congresses or similar gatherings. Petitions were also received from the Patriarchs of all the Eastern Churches in Communion with Rome, and from the Bishops of fifty-seven residential Sees of the Eastern Church, or 75 per cent of all Sees of the Eastern Church. In addition, 83,000 priests and religious, men and women, and—it is interesting to add—*more than eight million of the lay faithful* were represented in petitions. And, continues Fr. Henrich in this summary in the *Osservatore*, almost all the theologians—*quasi tutti i teologi*—who have written on the matter since the publication of these two volumes agree with his thesis that the *Magisterium ordinarium* of the Church had already, by 1940, been manifested sufficiently plainly in this manner.

⁴ In the present century there have been only two years in which petitions did not reach the Holy See asking for the definition of the doctrine: 1914 and 1927. In 1900 there were 67 petitions received at the Vatican; in 1901, 213; in 1902, 114; between 1900 and 1940 the year when most were received was 1934, with 352. Other figures: 1923, 18; 1930, 108; 1932, 138; 1933, 188; 1935, 127.

When these two great volumes of petitions, printed in 1942, were published at the beginning of 1945, there at once began, after the interruption of the second world war, a revival of the *movimento assunzionistico* throughout the Catholic world, even more vigorous than it had been before the war. Innumerable petitions, spontaneous and enthusiastic — we quote Fr. Henrich's phrases — were again sent to the Holy See by Bishops, heads of religious Orders, theologians, clergy and faithful of all the nations of the world. "It seemed," he writes, "that the tide of enthusiasm, contained by the recent cruel war as by a dyke, sought to overflow with greater velocity and force, so as to overthrow even the last difficulty and, that having been done, to attain to the end so much desired."

EPISCOPATES OF NATIONS ASKED FOR DEFINITION

The Episcopates of entire nations or regions demanded the definition: in two great National Councils (those of Chile, on December 30, 1946, with eighteen Bishops, and of India, January 18, 1950, with fifty-six Bishops and Ordinaries); in fourteen annual conferences of the Bishops (those of England and Wales, of Austria, of Cuba, of Hungary, of Peru, of Portugal, of Brittany, of Sicily, of Sardinia, of Piedmont, of Tuscany, of the ecclesiastical Provinces of Rimouski, in

Canada, São Paulo, in Brazil, and Tours, in France); then the entire Episcopate of Spain, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Ceylon, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, of three Provinces of China, and of other regions, on the occasion of fourteen International and National Congresses and eleven regional and diocesan Congresses; as also, moreover, on the occasion of eleven diocesan synods (those of Agrigento, Bosa, Cassano all'Jonio and Sovana-Pitigliano in Italy, Bamberg and Osnabrück in Germany, Bruges in Belgium, Ossory in Ireland, Guarda in Portugal, Chiapas in Mexico and Cuzco in Peru and of six meetings of diocesan clergy under episcopal chairmanship (those of Evreux, Perpignan and Rheims, in France; Ugento and Senigallia in Italy; and St.-John-in-Quebec in Canada). Altogether, 852 Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops, fourteen Vicars Capitular,⁵ and sixteen Prefects Apostolic, representing the episcopate in sixteen nations, have been associated in the spontaneous petitions sent to the Holy Father during the past five years.

PETITIONS OF RELIGIOUS

During that same period, all the Superiors General of all the sixty-three Orders of priests, representing 122,000 professed Religious, excepting only one little group of Eastern monks in Mesopotamia that has only

⁵ So writes Fr. Henrich in the *Osservatore*; we think this is a slip for Vicars Apostolic.

seventy-five professed members, and practically all the Superiors General of the seventy-nine religious Congregations of men, with about 100,000 professed members, excepting only four small local Congregations that have about a hundred professed members each, sent their petitions in the name of their Orders and Congregations. Thirty-two General Chapters, or almost all those that have been held in the last five years, including those of the Trappists, the Passionists, and the Salvatorians, among others, likewise petitioned the Holy Father.⁶ These petitions have a special importance, not only because they express the common feelings of the Orders and Congregations, but also because the Superiors General consulted the best theologians among their members before acting.

THEOLOGICAL DOCTRINE

The doctrine of the theologians, whether of the secular or of the regular clergy, who are entrusted, whether by the Pope, or by the Bishops, with the work of teaching, has a particular importance, because the consensus which exists among them represents a consensus of the *Ecclesia docens*. During the last five years considered petitions have been sent to the Holy See by nine of the ten Pontifical Universities and *Atenei* of Rome; by nineteen of the twenty-five canonically

erected Catholic Universities; by twelve of the fourteen canonically erected *Atenei* and Faculties of Ecclesiastical Studies; by the two Pontifical Theological Academies of Rome; by the Theological and Marian Societies of the United States of America, of Poland, of Spain, of Belgium and of Holland; by the Naples *Almo Collegio dei Teologi*; by all the Theological Faculties, making fifteen in all, of the State Universities of Austria, Yugoslavia, Poland, Switzerland, Hungary and (save one) of Czechoslovakia; by the Theological Faculties of five public colleges in Germany —those of Bamberg, Dillingen, Eichstätt, Frankfurt and Paderborn; by the Professors of Dogmatic Theology of the Universities of Monaco, Freiburg-im-Breisgau and Bonn (Professors Grabmann, Jüssen and Hünermann, the last of whom is today Auxiliary Bishop of Aachen); by the Rectors and Professors of the Major Seminaries of Bamberg, Cologne, Eichstätt, Limburg, Speyer, Paderborn, Hildesheim, Münster, Osnabrück, Passau and Würzburg; by six Theological Faculties situated in the territory of the Diocese of Dublin; by twenty Theological Faculties of the religious Orders which have the right of conferring theological degrees; by the Rectors and Professors of seventeen of the eighteen regional Pontifical Major Seminaries, of an-

⁶ See Fr. Henrich's list in his *De definitibilitate Assumptionis B.V. Mariae*; Rome, 1949.

other seventeen central and inter-diocesan Major Seminaries, of ninety diocesan Major Seminaries, and of eighty Theological Colleges of the various Orders. In short, two hundred among the Universities, Theological Faculties and Major Seminaries of the whole world have made formal collective approaches to the Holy See to secure the definition of the dogma of the Assumption, in forms which have often amounted to veritable theological dissertations.

GENERAL AGREEMENT

The hundreds of books, theses and articles on the same subject published during the past five years, notwithstanding the variety of their arguments, have agreed practically unanimously in affirming not only that the dogma might be defined, but also that it was opportune to define it. Again, there have been eighteen formal academic disputations, in which the doctrine of the Assumption has been upheld, *modo accademico*, against every difficulty, usually in the presence of Cardinals and Bishops, as in the Pontifical Gregorian University on December 12, 1946, in the presence of nine Cardinals and fifteen Bishops, or in the Antonianum in Rome on February 2, 1949, in the presence of eight Cardinals and Bishops, or in the Theological Faculties at Naples, at Posillipo, Oña, Granada, Barcelona, Salamanca and elsewhere.

How gravely and scrupulously

these theologians have prepared their petitions is clearly shown in the proceedings of the various Theological Congresses, which have often had the Assumption of Our Lady as the sole, or at any rate the chief, subject for their discussions. We may note, says Fr. Henrich, the International Theological Congress at Salamanca in September, 1949; that at Buenos Aires in September and October, 1948; the National Theological Congresses of Montreal, in August, 1948; Rome, in April and May, 1947; and Madrid, in October, 1947; the Congress of Franciscan theologians in Lisbon, October, 1947; the Theological Congress at New York in June, 1946, attended by 104 Professors and theologians from the Catholic University at Washington and from almost all the Theological Faculties and Seminaries of the United States; the *Settimana Teologica* of the Gregorian University in September 1948, in which Professors from almost all the Faculties and Seminaries of Italy took part; the Theological Congress that took place in Lublin in September, 1946, with the participation of all the leading theologians of Poland; that at Louvain, in August, 1946, with the participation of the Professors of Dogmatic Theology in the Catholic University of Louvain and the other theological Faculties of Belgium and Holland; the National Congress of the Assumption held by the theologians of France at Le-Puy-

en-Velay in August, 1949; and the similar congress of the theologians of Brazil held at Sao Paolo in February of the present year. The theologians of some thirty nations, therefore, have jointly—*collegialmente*, says Fr. Henrich—sent their petitions, after rigorous studies; whence it seems clearly possible to say that the definition of the dogma of the Assumption will follow the virtually unanimous consensus of Catholic theologians all over the world.⁷

Under the aegis of the Bishops the definition has been implored by eighty cathedral chapters, many Vicars General, innumerable other prelates, parish priests, etc., and by clergy and faithful assembled in seven International Congresses, in twenty nations, in forty regions; while from six nations petitions have come under the auspices of Catholic Action. An important *movimento assunzionistico*, Fr. Henrich reminds us, began in the spring of 1946 in all the dioceses of England and Wales; "quasi tutti i cattolici praticanti inglesi," he says, gave their adhesion to the proposal of the Bishops, the signatures being presented to the Holy

See in a score of large volumes. The petitions that have reached Rome in these last five years have come from all parts of the earth, from various associations of the clergy, from entire Congregations of religious, from the Marian Congregations, with their great International Congress of the Assumption at Barcelona in November and December, 1947, from the Third Orders of the Franciscans and the Dominicans; have been sent, in short, by millions of the faithful.

CONSULTED BISHOPS

On May 1st, 1946, in view of these world-wide requests, Pope Pius XII sent the Encyclical Letter *Deiparae Virginis*, composed "*in forma del tutto reservata*," to all the Bishops of the world, asking what their clergy and people thought about the Assumption and whether they themselves judged it "wise and prudent" that the dogma should be defined. The replies, analyzed by Fr. Henrich, show that of the residential Bishops of the world, including those Cardinals and Patriarchs who are residential Bishops, replies were received from 1,191, or 94 per cent of the

⁷ Fr. Henrich adds a footnote: "If one or two theologians who seem to have lost the true concept of the dogmatic tradition—see the public refutations published by the theologians G. Filograssi in the *Gregorianum* and J. Ternus in *Scholastik*, and to be published in the forthcoming number of the *Ephemerides Theol. Lovanienses*, by Professor G. Philips—have dissented in recent articles, these few exceptions underline the consensus of the other theologians. Moreover, the *Theologische Revue*, of Münster, publishes in its latest number (1950, No. 2, col. 106) a solemn declaration in which the editors protest that they do not wish to be identified in any way with the articles of Professor Altaner, recently published, or with the thesis that he maintains, or with his arguments, or with the judgments given by him on the opinions of others and on their own arguments."

total; while from only 86 Sees, mostly in remote corners of the mission-fields, have replies not yet been received. Favorable replies to the two questions were received from 1,022 of these residential Bishops; a further 111 had already sent spontaneous petitions; while from 36 Sees replies from Administrators or Vicars Capitular in a *sede vacante* period indicated no dissent. Favorable replies are therefore taken to have come in all from 1,169 dioceses, forming 98.2 per cent of the total of replies. Only twenty-two Bishops, or 1.8 per cent, showed certain doubts, generally on the ground that the time was not opportune, after affirming that the definition might otherwise be made. Only six of these twenty-two, or 0.4 per cent of the total, spoke of any doubt whether it might be made at all; that is, any doubt whether this was indeed part of the true revelation. We have, therefore, the proof that the residential Bishops, as the witnesses and custodians of revelation, have declared with virtually complete unanimity that the Assumption of Our Lady is a truth contained in revelation, and that its definition is opportune.

AND OTHER PRELATES

Similar proportions are found among the other Ordinaries. Among the Abbots and Prelates *Nullius*, the Administrators Apostolic *ad nutum S. Sedis*, the prelates of the Eastern

Rite having personal and territorial Ordinary jurisdiction, replies have come from fifty-nine Ordinaries out of sixty; that is, from 98.5 per cent. Favorable replies came from 46 of these; four had sent petitions a little while before; and seven Administrations Apostolic were in the *sede vacante* period. There were thus fifty-seven replies classed as favorable, and only two which were doubtful; 97 per cent, in other words, as against 3 per cent. Among the Vicars Apostolic 206 have replied, or 94.5 per cent; twelve, or 5.5 per cent, have not yet replied. Of these, 168 were favorable; twenty Vicars Apostolic had already sent petitions; fifteen Vicariates were vacant. We therefore have 203 Vicariates that may be taken to assent, or 98.5 per cent, and only three doubtful replies, or 1.5 per cent, among the Vicars Apostolic. Of the fourteen Cardinals who were not residential Bishops in 1946, thirteen have replied with enthusiastic favor; one has not yet replied; we are not, of course, told who he may be. Of the titular Bishops not included in the categories mentioned above, 381, or 84 per cent, have replied; 75, or 16 per cent, have not yet done so; and 284 have replied in an affirmative sense, while 92 had already sent in their petitions, making 376 favorable answers, or 99 per cent.

Of special interest are the figures for the seventeen Eastern Churches in communion with the Holy See, be-

cause they may be taken, says Fr. Henrich, to give some indication of what may be the reactions of those dissident Eastern Christians whose alleged opposition is produced by some, as we noted in this journal last week, as a reason for saying that the definition will be prejudicial to the cause of reunion and is therefore inopportune. Of the fifty-four replies from the Patriarchs and residential Bishops of the Eastern Church, all save one were favorable. Likewise, Fr. Henrich adds, the Bishops of those countries which have the highest proportions of Protestants are the best qualified to speak of the opportuneness of the definition from the point of view of the reconciliation of Protestants; and he goes on to cite again the fact that the Hierarchy of England and Wales in April, 1946, the month before the Encyclical *Deiparae Virginis*, sent a special joint request for the definition of the dogma, showing that they unanimously thought the time opportune, and that they followed this up with the collection of signatures referred to above, for which Fr. Henrich repeats the claim that almost the en-

tire Catholic population of this country associated themselves with the petition: *con una percentuale quasi del cento per cento dei cattolici praticanti*.

We wish that Fr. Henrich had not made quite so much of this point, because there can be no ground for saying that anything like the entire population of practicing Catholics in this country joined in the petition, and an air of special pleading is given to his survey by the repetition of this claim. We wish also that he had not improved his figures by counting dioceses consulted during a *sede vacante* period along with those whose Ordinaries positively recommended the definition. There can, however, be no gainsaying his general picture of a dogma that the Pope is going to proclaim in accordance with the earnestly expressed desire of the very great majority of the Episcopate throughout the world, so that the International Marian Congress that is to be held in Rome in the last days of October will be fittingly crowned on the Feast of All Saints by the solemn proclamation of the dogma as part of the faith of the Church.



A New System

We need an economic system that can produce more wealth. We need a more efficient system. We need to abolish the scandal of the material rewards of life being out of all proportion to the difference of personal contributions to the national income. In other words, we need a more equitable system.—James Hickey in *CHRISTUS REX*, January, 1950.

The "Definition" of a Dogma

REV. DR. JOSEPH C. FENTON

THE solemn definition of the dogma of Our Lady's Assumption into Heaven has aroused tremendous interest throughout the world. This interest was stimulated by newspaper headlines and stories, some of which, unfortunately, were inaccurate or at least misleading.

We read of "a new article of belief for Catholics" and of "the first infallible papal statement in nearly 100 years," and, if we do not take the trouble to inform ourselves correctly on this subject, we are quite likely to become badly confused or misled ourselves.

The first point for Catholics to remember at this time is the meaning of the word "definition" when it is used in the expression, "the solemn definition of Our Lady's Assumption." As it is used in ordinary conversation and writing in our country, the word "definition" usually signifies the description of a thing as it differs from others. Frequently it signifies the expression of the meaning of a word. A Church "definition," like that which the Holy Father will give of the dogma of Our Lady's Assumption, is something quite distinct from these definitions of things or of words.

The ecclesiastic meaning of this

term is more closely related to that of our English word, "definitive." Actually, the Church defines a doctrine or a dogma when she gives an irrevocable decision and thus, once and for all time, settles a question or a problem that concerns faith or morals. The Church defines a dogma when she declares that a certain truth has been revealed by God as something which all men are bound to accept with an act of divine faith.

Thus, on November 1, the Holy Father stated the doctrine of the Assumption, and then proclaimed the fact that this doctrine has been revealed by God as a part of that supernatural Christian message which the Catholic Church is commissioned to teach infallibly always. It is thus a dogma of the Church is defined.

OTHER INFALLIBLE TEACHINGS

It is important to remember, however, that the definition of a dogma is not the only infallible teaching act of the Catholic Church or of the visible head of the Church on earth. The teaching authority of the Church has been empowered by God to make infallibly accurate doctrinal decisions on matters not contained in the body of Christian revelation, but which are connected with that revelation so inti-

mately that misconceptions on these subjects would inevitably engender or occasion erroneous notions in the field of faith itself.

The Church can teach or define infallibly on matters of philosophy which are connected with the truths of divine faith. It can also teach or define infallibly when it states that some doctrine pertaining to faith or morals is certainly true, without, however, stating that this particular teaching has been revealed by God. It can and does teach infallibly also when it canonizes saints, when it makes a definitive declaration about what is known as a "dogmatic fact," and when it gives final approval to the constitutions of a religious order. In every one of these cases the Church is pronouncing on a subject on which a living and infallible teacher needs to be correctly informed if he is to accomplish his work on a matter of faith itself.

The Church uses both a positive and a negative method in making

infallible pronouncements or definitions. The definition of the dogma of the Assumption and the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX are examples of the positive approach. When this method is employed, a certain doctrine is brought forward and then declared to be something revealed by God, or at least something certainly true. When the negative approach is employed, a doctrine is brought forward and censured. When this rejected teaching is in contradiction of a truth contained in the deposit of Christian revelation, it is denounced as "heretical."

When, on the other hand, the reproved teaching contradicts a proposition which the Church proposes as certainly true, but not precisely as revealed, the offending doctrine is stigmatized as "erroneous" or as "false." Thus a statement contradicting the dogma of papal infallibility is something which must be qualified as heretical.



Modern Society

The reconstruction of modern society requires the organization of producers (using the term in its broad sense) in every field, in such a manner as to enable them to work democratically for their various special interests and for the common good of all.

The objective must be to transform the organizational basis of our society. Where men are now organized on a basis of their position in the labor market, they must be organized in the new age according to their functions in society.—*WAGE EARNER, November, 1950.*

Co-Management in Germany

*Reprinted from BACKGROUND LETTER**

ON THE remote lake of Maria Laach in the Eifel hills, three days were recently spent in a Benedictine monastery by representatives of the employers and trade unions of Germany, with Dr. Storch, the Minister of Labor, to guide their deliberations. The purpose of this self-imposed "retreat" was to try to reach complete agreement with regard to the problem of co-operation in industry, the shorter German title for which is "*Mitbestimmung*." The peaceful atmosphere of the cloisters, combined with a very considerable amount of goodwill, proved propitious. Unfortunately, however, in the bleaker air of party and trade-union politics, old differences revived, and the position is now again somewhat obscure. Discussions had been in progress since January and had given rise to carefully-prepared memoranda.

The general lines of the agreement reached at Maria Laach were that both employers and employees should work together in two main groups: the *Bundeskirtschaftsrat* (Federal Economic Council), and the *Wirtschaftskammern* (Economic Boards), organized in each district. In all factories and other undertakings

with more than a given number of employes, special committees containing an equal number of representatives of employers and employees were left to be worked out later. It was felt that relations between the two sides of industry would continue to be no less mutually trustful than before, and there was confidence that the Maria Laach discussions would be a contribution of major importance to social stability throughout Germany, where in any case the level of industrial discipline is probably higher than elsewhere.

Let us consider the proposals which formed the basis of the meeting, and try to indicate the character of the main difficulties, together with the prospects of their being solved.

The first thing to be noted is that there was on both the employers' and the workers' side a surprising lack of the intransigence which is so often found elsewhere. All the same, certain principles cropped up which are inherent in the nature of all capitalist enterprise on the one hand, and of all trade-union practice on the other. So long as the chief matter under discussion was that of the representation within industrial and

* Branch, British Information Services Zonal Office, The Commissioner's Office, Hamburg, BAOR 3, Germany, July 21, 1950.

other enterprises of workers actually engaged in those enterprises, such difficulties as were met could in the end be overcome. The rock upon which *Mitbestimmung* might founder is that of the representation of the workers by trade-union officials coming from outside the concerns for which they speak. This demand is made by the trade unions and, in general though not entirely, it is supported by the workers. Another, and it may be hoped a minor, reef which will impose skillful navigation is the further trade-union demand for an equal say by the workers in laying down the general lines of industrial policy, as distinct from its specific application. There is a clash of principles here—the employers contend that they must keep ultimate decisions in their own hands—but the difficulty of finding a solution is perhaps not an insuperable one.

EMPLOYERS AND UNIONS

The Federal Cabinet, it is reliably reported, at a meeting held on April 21, committed itself to the principle that no persons alien to any given concern should be allowed to represent the workers employed in it. This of course furnishes support for a demand made by the employers as a measure of self protection against what they allege to be the ultimate intention of the trade unions—namely, to acquire control over the whole of German industry.

In an industrial area about fifty per cent Roman Catholic any step taken by the Pope exerts an influence. Addressing the International Congress for Social Studies on June 3, 1950, He quoted Pope Pius XI, in the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, as denying the intrinsic need to substitute for the wage contract a contract of partnership. There was nothing in ordinary legal relationships, however, to contradict the fundamental parity of the paid worker, and the Pope did not forbid such a "contract of partnership." *Mitbestimmung* indeed is as strongly supported by the Christian unions in Germany as it is by the Social Democratic ones, for both see in it a contribution to industrial peace. It is not, at the moment, to be assumed that the Pope's words will have any decisive effect, but they will be borne in mind.

The employers, naturally enough, take the view that they who have borne the burden and heat of the day should alone be entitled to plan the morrow. Specifically, it is they who will be called upon to support whatever losses may be incurred. Hence, they argue, the general lines of industrial policy should be left to their own initiative and not allowed to pass into other hands.

In the general spirit of reasonableness which, to the mortification of the Communists, still tempers the German industrial atmosphere, the

Catholic workers have departed from the pure trade-union doctrine that the unions must be recognized as a political force applying their own independent political principles. At Gelsenkirchen on July 15 the Catholic Workers' Movement, which has 200,000 members, reasserted a number of trade-union demands, and gave its general agreement to *Mitbestimmung*. It made, however, it is reported, the important concession that it should not be exercised through persons or organizations not belonging to the concerns which they were deputed to represent. In a 10-point program subsequently adopted at a meeting of 30,000 Catholic workers belonging to the Movement, to whom the Pope sent a special blessing, the demand was made that *Mitbestimmung* should be brought about "in a positive manner"—a phrase which may be interpreted as meaning that no effort should be spared to achieve an acceptable compromise. Unfortunately, however, the Federal Board of Direction of the Trade Union Federation reacted very sharply to what they regarded as a defection by the Catholic workers. A statement was issued which demanded "equal rights for capital and labor and an equal share of responsibility for the workers and their organizations in all economic decisions." The statement

then renewed the demand that workers should be able to be represented by trade-union officials from outside the concerns.

From the employers' point of view this once more put the cat among the pigeons. It has led, on the trade-union side, to threats of "economic warfare with the use of trade union weapons," to which the employers reply in effect that the snubbing of the Catholic Workers' Movement—the élite of the Christian Trade Unions—for making a useful concession in all good faith is a sign that trade-union ambitions are a threat to industrial peace.

ORGANIZATIONS IN THE BRITISH ZONE

In a carefully-prepared study of industrial relations in Germany¹—detailed particulars will be found of the development and present situation of the employers' and workers' organizations in the British Zone. The publication in question is up to date as far as 1949, but the trend towards *Mitbestimmung* on the basis of parity of the trade unions with the employers' associations has advanced since then. This may be seen from the mere fact that the word *Mitbestimmung* is now generally accepted whereas, until recently, employers did not always like to go beyond the notion of *Mitberatung*,

¹ Cmd. 7923, H. M. Stationery Office, London, 9d.

or consultation with employees, without conceding the right of parity. The circumstances in which parity should be applied are among the questions still outstanding. The most recent demand made by the trade unions is for complete parity in concerns with more than a thousand workers; a ratio of 1:3 in concerns with five hundred to a thousand workers; and a reversion to the

workers' council law, which is less favorable, in respect of smaller concerns. This plan has not yet been accepted by the employers.

It is likely, when discussions have proceeded further—and if, despite the latest setback, a workable compromise can be attained—that the Government will itself propose a Bill embodying the main features put forward by both sides.



Prudence in Social Reform

Catholic social reformers need to be on their guard against raising false hopes from any simple remedy for a complex social disease or exaggerating the efficacy of any merely empirical reform for evils which are basically moral and spiritual. Impatient Catholic reformers may sometimes succumb to the temptation to allow "no (oratorical) enemies to the left" of the Catholic social movement! We must resist the inclination to outbid the revolutionaries in the sweeping character of our denunciations of a loosely defined capitalism and in the exaggerated nature of our promises of a classless utopia. It is worse to be wrong than to be "reactionary."—*C. B. Daly in CHRISTUS REX, October, 1950.*



Judgment on Sin

Sin evokes judgment and judgment falls on every generation separating the good from the bad. In a sense every generation and every individual is challenged by doom and the end of the world comes upon it and him. We live under a dispensation which is a release from sin, if we battle on the right side and for the kingdom of God. But this has very little to do with the prosperity we promise ourselves by the aid of economics and social improvement and even international peace.—*Martin D'Arcy, S.J., in UNITAS, July, 1950.*

Significant Developments in Convert Work

JOHN A. O'BRIEN, PH.D.

*Reprinted from THE AVE MARIA**

THE campaign to win the churchless people of our land to Christ is at last beginning to shift from the low gear in which it has so long been stuck. While not yet moving into "high," it is at least edging into "second." This "stepping up" of the campaign is one of the most encouraging signs on the horizon. A nation-wide survey of the convert movement discloses some interesting and significant developments which it will be worthwhile to summarize briefly.

The spread of Catholic Information Centers across the country is significant because it reflects the joint efforts of priests and people to make it easier for the general public to secure accurate information concerning the teachings and practices of our holy Faith.

At the opening of such a center in South Bend, we were pleasantly surprised to find the room packed, with an overflow crowd in an adjoining room; and others, unable to gain admittance, standing on the outside. Through the plate glass window they witnessed the proceedings and through an open transom they heard the lecture. One night a week for

the three following weeks we lectured on the credentials of the Catholic Church: her authority to teach mankind in the name of her Divine Founder.

The audience was chiefly Catholic, consisting largely of lay people who came to volunteer their services at the center and to deepen their knowledge of the Faith. There was, however, a sprinkling of non-Catholics who saw the item in the newspaper and welcomed the chance to learn the truth about the Catholic religion.

Just this week we received into the Church eight of that little group of non-Catholics, while four others were referred to Catholic pastors in their neighborhood for instruction. The center bids fair to reach many people who would not come to a rectory. One of the converts whom we received said frankly:

"Seeing that the lecture was to be given in a store down-town, I thought I could step in and listen without committing myself, just as one steps into a store and looks around. But I would not have come if it were given in a Catholic church; the fact that you enter the Center directly

* Notre Dame, Ind., December 10 and 17, 1949.

from the street and can look in through the large plate glass window before entering doubtless helped a lot. I had heard so many calumnies against the Catholic religion that I was far from being ready to cross the threshold of a Catholic church."

"What particular point in the lecture," we inquired, "caused you to return?"

"It was that chart you held up," he said, "which showed that Christ founded the Catholic Church back in the first century, while all the non-Catholic sects were started by men in the last few centuries. That did the trick. It took the ground from under my previous belief and showed me that the Catholic religion was worth looking into carefully. You know the result . . . and now I can scarcely wait to make my first Holy Communion and begin to make up for lost time."

In his story there is reflected the experience of many other converts won through Information Centers. They are moved to enter because of the friendly, open, public character of the centers, situated as a rule in a business district; once inside, their misconceptions and prejudices fade away before the light of Christ's truth.

The opening of the Information Center at Louisville was most impressive: a solemn high Mass attended by Archbishop Floersh, the

clergy of the city, the Knights of Columbus, and more than a thousand of the faithful. Then followed a procession to the Center. The location is ideal and the facilities are excellent.

A panel discussion on the purposes of the Center, broadcast that afternoon over a local radio station, carried the story into virtually every home. A lecture that evening at Nazareth College auditorium on methods by which the laity can recruit prospects and win converts brought the triple program of the day to a happy close.

The continued spread of the Information Center means much for the spread of the Faith; for the Center is one of the most effective agencies for bringing the Faith to the unchurched masses. The next step is to establish a Center in all the remaining cities, say, of fifty thousand population and to multiply the ones in our larger cities so there will be one serving each of the large sections of the city.

PASTORAL LETTERS

The issuance of a pastoral letter, setting forth the duty of the laity to win converts and showing how they can fulfill that duty, constitutes another forward step. Such a Pastoral was issued by Archbishop Duke of Vancouver, and read in every church in the archdiocese. It will help lay people to realize that they have an in-

escapable duty to share in the apostolate of winning souls, and will stir them to action. This is the first step in the recruitment of large numbers for public information lectures and inquiry classes.

In the stirring words of the Archbishop of Boston is sounded the keynote of the whole crusade—the urgent imperative call for every Catholic man, woman and youth to win each year one un-churched person to Christ. While we are endeavoring to bring that message to every Catholic family, naturally it will reach more of them when it is issued in pastoral form by all the members of the hierarchy and read from every pulpit.

LAY ORGANIZATIONS

The efforts to enlist lay organizations in winning converts also mark a significant development. These numerous and closely knit organizations of Catholic men and women will be quickened and strengthened in their own distinctive work by taking on the additional objective of winning souls. Consisting of millions of members, they constitute ideal agencies to assist the Church in extending the Kingdom of Christ.

When the convert movement gets into full swing, these societies should be instrumental in winning millions of souls for Christ. As we go to press, Archbishop O'Boyle, spiritual director of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, sends word about his

plan to submit to the supreme council a proposal to add the winning of converts to the objectives of the Society. It is to be hoped that the national officers of all the other organizations will take steps to include convert work among the activities recommended for all their members.

We have recently administered the pledge to win at least one convert a year to 550 Knights of Columbus at their Communion breakfast in Indianapolis in the presence of Archbishop Schulte, to 300 college students at the Catholic Students Missionary Convention at Notre Dame, and to 150 members of the C.Y.O. in Fort Wayne. All took the pledge with great earnestness and will, we are confident, fulfill it.

MARRIAGE AND COMPANY-KEEPING

Mixed marriages can be made prolific sources of conversion, when tactful and energetic efforts are made to recruit the non-Catholic spouse for classes of instruction. Most of them are favorably predisposed by the example of their Catholic partners and will welcome the opportunity to learn the teachings of our holy Faith and unify their family life through entering the Fold.

Perhaps even more fruitful sources of conversion are the non-Catholic parties keeping company with Catholics. The experience of Father Hugh L. McMenamin, Father Vernon

Rosenthal and others demonstrates that when religious information lectures are given several times a year, non-Catholic suitors generally welcome the opportunity to get a complete picture of the religion of their Catholic friends.

They are prompted to attend such courses by the further consideration that they are not making extra demands upon the priest's time and are not committing themselves in advance. When earnest efforts are regularly made to enroll the non-Catholic party in a full course of instruction instead of the inadequate six instructions now commonly required, the number of conversions will mount rapidly and the vast majority of prospective mixed marriages will terminate in Catholic weddings, with both parties receiving Holy Communion, thus bringing God's richest blessing upon them.

PUBLIC INFORMATION LECTURES

The continued growth of inquiry classes and public information lectures is one of the most notable developments in recent years. Winning its way in spite of the deeply rooted custom of private instruction, prevalent in the era of two converts per priest per year, the group plan of instruction, supplemented with abundant individual contact and guidance, is now used in virtually every parish where converts are numerous.

We have outlined this plan at length and stressed its efficiency because every nation-wide survey we have conducted has shown that its use is the real secret of the larger totals, ranging from 30 to 100, achieved by the most successful workers in this field.

When public information lectures are conducted two or three times a year in every parish, the annual total of converts will not merely double but will triple and quadruple. Such a series of public lectures enables each parish to do for the public in its territory what the Information Center seeks to do for the community as a whole.

New and striking corroboration of the effectiveness of this plan in another area—that of mixed marriages—is presented by Father Rosenthal. After the adoption of the program of public information lectures, the number of mixed marriages declined from 19 to 12 to 7 while the number of Catholic marriages mounted from 30 to 36 to 45. Pastors who bemoan—and rightly so—the large number of mixed marriages now commonly occurring in virtually all parishes will find in the establishment of public information lectures two or three times a year an effective antidote.

The findings which have poured in upon us from all parts of the country during the past year prompt us to stress such Inquiry Forums, Pub-

lic Information lectures, which we have also called the group plan of recruitment and of instruction, as the *most effective single means* of increasing the fruitfulness of convert work.

It is to be noted that this is not merely a matter of method or technique of instruction; it is primarily a method of recruitment of prospects, a means of reaching the vast multitude starving for want of a knowledge of Christ's truths. If the large number of prospects recruited by a well-publicized campaign can be instructed individually, no one would deny the instructor the privilege of doing this. The method of instructing is a minor matter, a mere means to an end. But the end must be achieved; and the limited number of instructors and the vast number to be instructed will compel in the majority of cases the use of the group method, supplemented with abundant individual contact and direction.

PARISH CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, organized in every parish, can aid mightily in winning converts through its study and discussion clubs. Non-Catholics should be invited to all such meetings, and be given the opportunity to ask questions and thus have their misconceptions removed. The study club should have in mind the enlightenment of those outside the fold as well

as of their own members; in this way the regular machinery of the parish will be geared into convert work. Not until the total resources of every parish are mobilized for this work shall we make proper headway in reaching the ever enlarging multitude of unchurched people in our midst.

THE PAMPHLET

Many instances have been reported to us, showing how individuals first became interested in the systematic study of the faith through reading a pamphlet. The increase of the Witnesses of Jehovah is traceable in no small part to their extensive circulation of pamphlets, magazines and books. Our ideal should be to have every family take a pamphlet as they leave the church on Sunday, read it carefully themselves, and then loan it to people with no church affiliation. In this way our laity could play a role the year around in the endless task of recruiting prospects for inquiry classes and public lectures.

The pamphlet is an ideal agency to stir the interest of outsiders: small, inexpensive, quickly read and easily digested, it can serve as a channel of light and of grace to many a soul in the darkness. The first step then is to have several racks well stocked with attractive pamphlets in every church vestibule; this should be a *must* in the work of tying the parish into the convert apostolate.

STREET PREACHING

Street preaching and the work of our motor missionaries must be enlarged and intensified in the determined effort to penetrate No-Priest Land and secure a beachhead for the Church in this neglected area. Here are fields where our seminarians can be used to the advantage of outsiders and to their own profit. Plans must be made whereby all our seminarians in theology are afforded experience in explaining the teachings of Christ to the multitudes untouched by any Church.

They would thus acquire an insight into the minds of those outside the Fold which would be invaluable to them in their priestly ministry. They would learn how to contact outsiders, how to gain a hearing for the religion of Christ, and how to avoid mere controversy and present the truth constructively, kindly and persuasively. The Paulist seminarians gain such experience by participating in the work of the Catholic Evidence Guilds. On Sunday afternoons during the spring and fall of the year they go to Franklin Park in downtown Washington. Setting up a portable platform, they take turns in presenting points of Catholic doctrine to interested crowds.

They endeavor to answer all questions in a friendly manner; in spite of the remarks of hecklers seeking to confuse them, they learn that truth needs no other allies than unfailing

kindliness, patience and fair play. In the neglected areas of the south and west as well as at the street corners of our cities, Christ's truths must be proclaimed to multitudes.

OTHER MEANS

In response to the carefully framed ads run by the Knights of Columbus in national magazines during the past year as well as those run by the Narberth League, thousands of inquirers are now enrolled for systematic instruction.

The Confraternity Home Study Service, 4422 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis 8, Missouri, under the direction of Father Lester J. Fallon, C.M., is reaching an ever increasing number of inquirers in all States of the Union and even in foreign lands. Until we have a larger army of trained lay apostles who will devote themselves to bringing Christ's truths into all the areas where no priest is available, we must make increasing use of correspondence courses. We can refer to such agencies interested inquirers who for one reason or another hesitate to approach the rectory. We should make the free services of such correspondence courses more widely known to the general public and thus leave no stone unturned in the effort to increase the great fruitfulness of their work. It is one of the outstanding developments in the convert movement in recent years.

SEMINARIANS PLAY CRUCIAL ROLE

Worthy of note among recent developments is the increased interest and eagerness of seminarians to learn the "know-how" in the winning of converts. Seminarians from distant states have called upon us and plied us with questions, showing the closeness with which they are following the progress of the movement. Apparently the symposium *Winning Converts* is being read and studied in every major seminary; for the results achieved by experienced convert workers, reported in that volume, opened many eyes to hitherto unsuspected possibilities and fired seminarians with determination to be prepared for this work by the time of their ordination.

The Paulist Seminary in Washington, D. C. is setting a good example by the establishment of a four-year course in convert work. Father John T. McGinn and other Paulists of similar rich experience lecture to the students on every phase of convert making. Are the courses meeting a widely felt need and getting a generous response? Hundreds of students from other seminaries in the vicinity flock to hear the lectures. The seminarians know they will be handicapped in this division of their work if they are given no practical guidance; they do not wish to travel at the traditional pace of the average of two converts per priest per year;

they want to give a better account of themselves than that—and they will. In this respect the enthusiasm of the students has outrun the capacity of the seminary to provide for their expressed needs.

In addition to incorporating a four-year course in convert making into the seminary curriculum, it would be advisable to invite priests who have achieved outstanding success to detail their technique and to pass on to the students information not found in books. Their conferences would be concrete and chock-full of incidents which would illustrate the methods better than a volume of abstract theory.

The rectors of our seminaries hold in their hands the key to the larger success of the convert movement. Within the walls of those sanctuaries of learning and of holiness the mind and heart of the young priest are formed. If the vision of the Good Shepherd leaving the ninety-nine sheep to go in search for the one that had strayed away, and searching till He found it, is kept constantly before the eyes of the future levite, he will not fail to follow in his ministry the example of the divine Master.

CONVERTS HELP CONVERTS

The survey shows a growing practice of enlisting all converts into an organization to win new members. By virtue of their understanding of the sensitivity, misconceptions and

prejudices of non-Catholics, and because of their numerous contacts with outsiders, converts have unusual opportunities to recruit new prospects. Experience proves that it is not enough to speak a word or two to them along these lines at the completion of the course: it is necessary to organize them into a club for this purpose. In some places the club is composed exclusively of converts, but in most places it consists of converts and of born Catholics. Such an organization frequently achieves more than all the other members of the parish in bringing to the inquiry classes new recruits.

Twice we have attended the annual banquet of the Benson Club, composed of hundreds of converts, founded by Monsignor A. J. Burns, of Sterling, Illinois. The work of these members in deepening their own faith and in striving to share it with others is most impressive. They have brought hundreds of prospects for instruction. They have been encouraged to show their appreciation of the Faith by winning new members, and they have kept inquiry classes going virtually all year round.

Father Leonard B. Nienaber of Lexington, Kentucky, has organized a club, The Guild of St. Paul, consisting of converts and born Catholics, for recruiting prospects and he reports that it has proved most helpful. The existence of a permanent

club to recruit people for the public information lectures will spare the priest the task of improvising a recruiting organization every time he launches a new course of instruction. When such a convert club is formed in every parish, the convert movement will shift into high gear and parishes will be achieving totals ranging from fifty to one hundred converts a year.

AN INFORMED LAITY

The survey shows that our laity must secure a better understanding of their religion if they are to do their part in bringing Christ's truths to churchless people. There are now available many books explaining Catholic belief and practice which are helpful to inquirers, converts and instructors. It is recommended that every Catholic home acquire these books and that its members read and discuss them. Catholics have a duty to study and know their religion and to explain it to others. "Sanctify the Lord Christ in your hearts," admonished St. Peter, "being ready always to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you."

That obligation is not satisfied by referring an inquirer to a priest. An unfavorable impression is made upon the non-Catholic who inquires about the Catholic religion only to be told, "See a priest." While such a response may be justified if the question re-

lates to some abstruse point of theology or Scripture, it is not justifiable when it concerns the fundamentals of Faith and practice, as most such inquiries do.

The pontiffs and bishops of the Church have frequently stressed the duty on the part of Catholics to study their religion, its history, its credentials, its doctrines, its liturgy, its sacramental system, its moral teachings, its philosophy, its discipline and the application of its teachings to the political, economic and social problems of the day. This means they must read Catholic books and plenty of them; they should take an active part in the work of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, established by papal mandate in every parish, and they should participate in the discussions sponsored by its study clubs.

A Catholic who understands his Faith thoroughly will be able not only to practice it more intelligently and fruitfully but also to explain its truth and its beauty to his non-Catholic friends. He will be able to second the efforts of his spiritual leaders in removing the many misconceptions which today are keeping millions outside the Church of Christ.

On the other hand, the Catholic who reads no Catholic books or magazines and makes no effort to acquire a thorough knowledge of his religion shocks his non-Catholic

friend whose simplest question he is unable to answer. Such Catholics give outsiders the impression that our people are "priest-ridden," that our religion is a matter of superstition, and that people who want reasons for their religious faith could not feel at home in the Catholic Church. Instead of winning converts to the Faith, such Catholics deter them. We appeal therefore to every lay Catholic to set himself resolutely to the task of studying his religion with the greatest care and thoroughness, that his own practice of it may be more fruitful and that he may be able to explain it to outsiders and thus help to guide them safely into the Church of Jesus Christ.

CONTACTS AT CHURCH DOOR

The survey discloses that more priests are beginning to greet people at the front door of the church and to be especially alert to welcome the stranger with no church affiliation. At the Sunday Masses in virtually every church there are non-Catholics present; they come with their Catholic friends and their very presence bespeaks an open-mindedness and a friendliness which can be capitalized for a divine purpose. A friendly word of welcome to them as they enter or as they leave, a gracious offer to explain to them the meaning of the Mass and other doctrines of the Catholic Faith will often result in their coming to the public informa-

tion lectures and thus to their ultimate embrace of our religion.

A Chicago monsignor, with more than 1600 converts to his credit, reports that he has made this his invariable practice through the years and that there has scarcely ever been a Sunday on which he has not met one or more non-Catholics. Father James J. Navagh counsels priests in mission areas to have the prayers after Mass recited by the people while he retires to the sacristy to unvest, so that he can meet them and especially the non-Catholic visitors at the church door as they depart. We, too, can testify on the basis of more than thirty years experience in meeting people at the church door that it is a fruitful place for recruiting prospects for inquiry classes.

Monsignor William J. Barry at St. Patrick's Church in Miami Beach, Florida, has made this a practice during virtually all his priestly ministry; it has enabled him to win many converts and to enlist the help of visitors, Catholic and non-Catholic, in building one of the most complete parish plants in our country. It stands at the tip of the southland not only as a mighty evidence of the ancient Faith but also as an eloquent testimonial to the fruitfulness of a gracious and zealous ministry at the church's front door. It is to be hoped that this practice will continue to spread until it becomes universal.

CRUSADE OF PRAYER

Significant among the recent developments in the convert movement is the growing realization that the first step in launching a course of instruction is a crusade of prayer. Unless priests and people appeal to Almighty God with prayers for the precious grace of faith for unbelievers, their efforts will bear little if any fruit. The survey shows that parishes are now prefacing the campaign for converts with a Holy Hour for conversions. A booklet of prayers for this purpose has been prepared by Father Albert A. Murray, C.S.P., and its use by the parishioners will serve to increase their fervor and devotion.

The Holy Hour serves likewise to deepen the realization by the laity of the duty imposed upon them by Christ to engage actively in the apostolate of extending His kingdom in the minds and hearts of men. No longer will they feel that they can go about their own business and show no concern for those untouched by the saving truths of Christ. More effective than sermons, exhortations or books in enlisting their zeal in the recruiting of converts will be the prayers which rise up from their own minds and hearts.

Once searchers for the truth get down on their knees and pray, light from on high streams into their minds and enables them to perceive

the truth hitherto veiled from their eyes. They will suit the action to the word and thus show Almighty God their willingness to serve as channels of the precious grace of faith to the vast multitudes groping in the darkness for the pillar of truth and light. The holding of the Holy Hour for conversions at frequent intervals is the next important step.

FINAL WORD

We end on the note with which we began: the winning of a 100,000,000 churchless people of our land for Christ is the most urgent task facing the Church in America. Instead of decreasing, that vast churchless multitude is constantly increasing so that America is Christian today only in name; yet these are souls for whom Christ died and for whom He yearns

with a ceaseless love. Hence we must mobilize all our resources to bring to them the saving truths of Christ.

Our resources are approximately 41,000 priests and 25,000,000 lay members. It is obvious that such a small band of clergy cannot by themselves recruit and instruct 100,000,000 churchless people. Only through the enlistment of all our laity can the job be done; and with their active assistance, it can be accomplished within a generation or two.

Hence priests, bishops, our Holy Father and Christ Himself are calling upon every Catholic man, woman and youth to take their places in the glorious apostolate of bringing the full deposit of Christ's truths to the unchurched people of our land. The rallying cry of this holy crusade is, "God wills it!"

To the Stature of Christ

Were we habitually to allow ourselves to follow the promptings of grace, as we ought, we should soon see how stunted our spiritual growth is, despite the honorable position and attainments which are ours in the natural order. When the Author of the *Imitation* said that he would rather feel compunction than know its definition, he was holding no brief for ignorance but he was trenchantly expressing how vain our titles are unless we increase in love of God and grow up to the full stature of Christ.

Anyone who wishes to attain this full growth will have to bear the "growing pains" of self-denial, of fidelity to the movements of grace, of real humility, of abandonment to God, of loving acceptance of the Cross. The Holy Spirit is an inexorable pace-setter. If we would "exult as a giant in running in the way" of Christ, we must resign ourselves to daily mortification in all its forms, with all its attendant pains. Our lips will be parched and our feet sore, but we shall be running in such a way as to gain the prize.—CATHOLIC MIRROR, November, 1950.

You Can Have Your White Collar

ART SULLIVAN

*Reprinted from WORK**

I USED to line up with the sidewalk superintendents to watch buildings go up. Those days are gone now. I don't watch any longer. I'm in there helping to build.

What's it look like from the inside? Well, a lot different than from the outside, that's for sure.

In the old days I used to fall for those stories about how the building trades were loafing on the job. There's a cure for people who insist this is so. Put them out on a construction job for a week or two. Let them see first hand how the sweat rolls when bricklayers, carpenters and laborers are at work.

I've kept my eyes open to look for anybody lying down on the job. Sure, here and there you'll find men who aren't exactly knocking themselves out. The superintendent usually catches up with those guys, though.

Most of the fellows—practically all, I'd say—put in a full day's work. After eight hours on the job, they're usually ready for a rest at home.

In fact, I'd say that there's much less "goldbricking," or loafing, in the building trades than there is in offices. I've spent some time in white-collar

work, and I know that office people have a lot of leeway that manual workers don't have.

Of course, I'm not saying that office workers don't deserve every consideration they can get. Let them have those few minutes over coffee in the morning—let them get a few personal telephone calls.

Those are small rewards for what they have to put up with—including small salaries. In fact, they should be slightly "jealous" of me and guys like me.

I get \$1.85 an hour. Good money when you can get it—but the point is that you don't get it the year around. For most laborers winter means a long layoff. And we don't collect money when it rains. Also, no vacations.

I explained all this to an office clerk recently, and he told me: "I wouldn't mind having your job. You're out in the air all day. Pretty fair pay, too. But I dunno—it wouldn't be right for me to be just a laborer."

Well, let him wear that proud badge, the white collar. I'll take my old Army pants, blue shirt and work shoes.

You won't see me get flabby. I have a chance to use the muscles that God gave me. When I flop into bed at night, my body is tired, but I know that in the morning I'll be able to flex my arms with new strength. No restless, sleepless nights for me.

Besides, I like construction work because I've always had a yearning to build, to make things that are useful. When I pour concrete and carry bricks, I can see something going up before my eyes. I'm making homes that families can live in, and in future years when I go past those homes, I'll be able to say, "I helped build those."

Makes one feel a little like God. He made the world for people to live in and I'm helping to make homes for people to live in.

I'm a union member, and I joined up without worrying about whether the boss would be on my neck. Out here, the workers are considered grownup—not tied to their employ-

er's apron-strings, as office workers usually are.

I like the fellows I work with. They run through all ages, from just out of school to old men who've been in the trade thirty, forty years. Some of them talk kind of rough, but there's less petty bickering than there is around offices.

When you get behind with your work, the other guys come over and lend you a hand. There are no islands here, where each guy does just his "own" job and no other. You've got to work as a team.

Some people think that I should be working in an office, because it's clean there, the neighbors are impressed, and you can wear white shirts. You can have it!

I'll get dirty, then wash it off. I'll work harder, but feel much healthier as a result. I'll wear blue collars on the job. I'll save my white shirts for the evening, and my suit for the weekend. Then I'll really feel dressed up.



Some Progress

Fortunately, the major hurdle of union recognition lies far behind, except in isolated instances. There has existed for the last decade one major and hopeful advance—the acceptance of the collective bargaining relationship itself—under both the Wagner Act and the Labor-Management Relations Act of 1947. Union recognition as such, which was formerly a central issue of industrial relations, has been removed from the scene of overt industrial warfare.—CATHOLIC LABOR OBSERVER, Sept. 28, 1950.

On Selecting My Neighbors

*Reprinted from THE CATHOLIC CHARITIES REVIEW**

IN THE past it would have been quite easy for me to select my own neighbors. I could have selected people of my own kind, my own nationality, or of my own race. All I had to do was to have some real estate operator sign me up with others under what was known as a restricted covenant. Now the Supreme Court of the United States has thrown out the restricted covenant. It has stated that the restricted covenant which I have made with my neighbors in regard to the disposal of my home and property can no longer be enforced. To make it still more difficult for me to gratify my prejudices, the Federal Housing Administration has announced that it will no longer underwrite mortgages on homes that are to be reserved for a particular nationality or racial group.

As I debate with people from all parts of the country about my right to enjoy my prejudices, some point out that they are too expensive a luxury. They remind me that I am living in a revolutionary age. The masses throughout the world are thoroughly aroused. Everywhere we are having crusades on behalf of the equality of all men; everywhere, no matter what the color of their skins, all men want to be regarded as equal.

Recently I had a series of discussions on the equality of races with a brilliant young Indian priest. He said that he was well aware of the contribution that Great Britain had made to Indian welfare. The basic fault that he found with British rulers was that they regarded the Indians as a second-class people. He pointed out that the time had passed when any people was willing to be regarded as a second-class people.

What my Indian priest friend said had a moral for the selection of my neighbors. Why should I contribute to a system under which the people of a city are segregated by social status, by wealth, by nationality, by race? I might contend that I am a free man and so are others who join with me in building up a neighborhood. I might think about my neighborhood as a sort of private club. Nobody questions the right of clubs to make their own rules about membership. Why should not the people of a neighborhood have the same right? I am reminded, however, that there is a vast difference between my club and the ordinary

* 1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington 6, D. C., September, 1950.

neighborhood. The Federal Government, through its guaranteed mortgages on housing, now has a vital interest in every American neighborhood. In its rules governing mortgages, it lays down the principle that the right to housing in the neighborhood must not be confined to any special group. The Government has no such interest in private clubs.

I may contend that Government cannot do anything that will rob me of the home that represents the savings of my lifetime, the biggest investment that I have ever made or ever will make. Surely, I contend, Government should not do anything that will undermine the American family's right to a home of its own. What I have in mind is that if ownership of homes in a certain area is not confined to a specific nationality or race, other groups may swoop down on the neighborhood and overcrowd the homes. They may destroy its property values. Now before I emphasize this point too much, I must be sure that I am on a solid foundation. As I examine my case I am reminded that nearly all American cities now have mixed neighborhoods in which property values have been maintained. Why should my neighborhood not become a mixed neighborhood without sacrificing its property values? If the same kind of leadership that is now joining with me in confining the neighborhood to certain limited groups would use its ingenuity in the admission of limited numbers of other groups, there is no reason why it would not fare as well as mixed neighborhoods in other sections.

ALL EQUAL BEFORE GOD

What is back of my thinking all the time is that I am a sort of superior person, that I represent a superior group, that I deserve special consideration over people in other groups. If this is my real feeling about the matter, I need to re-examine my conscience in the light of Christian universalism. This is what I was taught in my school days. This is what I have been teaching and writing through the years. Now the opportunities for bringing my practice in line with my teaching are looming up more clearly before me. I see millions protesting against the classification of second-rate citizenship to which society has assigned them. They are rising in revolt against such an assignment. They tell us that it is in conflict with all Christian teaching.

I ask myself, if people have been satisfied with a certain status for many generations, why all this commotion today? However, I am constantly reminded, as I was by the young Indian priest, that we are living in a new age that has come to look on things in another way.

I know very well that we have had other periods of great change in the world's history. The breaking up of the feudal system and the creation of the present proprietorship represent a revolutionary change. Feudal systems of land ownership are still in process of being broken up in many countries throughout the world today. This is in accordance with the Christian ideals of the ownership of property, provided, of course, that individuals are given an opportunity to own property. If it means collective farming and complete Government control over the lives of the people, it will be worse than slavery.

As I examine my conscience, I find that I cannot go along with the assumption that my group or I belong to a superior class. I cannot recognize the claim of any group to belong to a superior class. I know that this has been happening through most American history. The groups that arrived here first generally regarded the groups that came later as their inferiors. This cannot possibly lead to a Christian philosophy of life. We are all equals before God and His Church. We have a responsibility to point the way in the practice of a Christian philosophy of life. We must be willing to accept as our neighbors people of every nationality and every race.

Policy for the Orient

Long ago, as Christians and as men of sense, we should have demanded of our politicians and ourselves the vast efforts needed to raise living standards in Asia. I agree at once that this would have required (will require now, if we are not too late) a radical transformation of the world economy, world politics. But let us be certain that the alternative to this transformation is an Asia on the march: a march that could be stopped only in unprecedented slaughters that would sicken the whole heart and life of the people that might survive them. The Russians have seen all this. They see an Asia expansion, either by domestic development or by external advances, as practically inevitable. And they propose to ride the Asian dragon.—*Paul McGuire in COLUMBIA, November, 1950.*

Editorials

Anglican "History"

THE venerable sees of Canterbury and York in England are much older than the Church of England. They were established by the Pope in the long-distant days when England adhered to the unity of the Catholic Church. In the well-mannered fashion of the Christian Church they were filled by papal appointments until the uxorious Henry Tudor wanted permission to marry and murder wives wholesale. Since Rome could not grant this ugly permission, Henry broke with the Apostolic Church and began to fill English sees with pliant candidates who would bow to his base will.

Since then, English kings and queens, good, bad and indifferent, have been naming the archbishops of Canterbury and York. We accord them these courtesy titles although it is known to theologians well-versed in history that they possess no powers of the priesthood or the episcopacy. Even though they should regain these powers through consecration by true though schismatic bishops, they could lay no claim to Apostolicity, since the line of Apostolic succession was snapped by Henry VIII.

Both Anglican prelates have repudiated the dogma of the Assumption

of the Blessed Virgin into heaven. The archbishop of York fortified his position by one of the strangest statements of modern record. "We must in charity," he said, "make it plain that the Church of England is the ancient Catholic Church of this land." (Surely his remarks should have been graced with an exclamation point.)

The beautiful Cathedral of York (built by Catholics and usurped by Protestants) which he uses as his official church is a witness in stone to the Assumption. Over the door is a Catholic-inspired sculpture of the glorious Virgin being assumed, body and soul, into the kingdom of her Son!—CATHOLIC UNIVERSE BULLETIN, *Cleveland, Ohio*, Nov. 3, 1950.

Fumbling the Spanish Question

FOR a completely confusing and baffling problem you just can't beat that of the relations between Spain and the United States. Let's take a quick look at recent developments.

Last week the United Nations finally got around to doing something about its slightly absurd anti-Spain resolutions passed in 1946. These were the resolutions condemn-

ing the Franco regime, excluding Spain from membership both in the U.N. and all its agencies, and banning the sending of representatives of ambassadorial rank to Madrid.

In its action last week the U.N. rather sheepishly withdrew the ban against ambassadors and the resolution excluding Spain from participation in specialized U.N. agencies.

This action was accomplished with the support of the United States and raised hopes that we might be on the way towards more realistic relations with Spain. These hopes, however, immediately received a chilly dousing from President Truman himself who made it known that he has no intention of returning an ambassador to Madrid in anything like the near future.

The reaction from the Spanish side was even less constructive or encouraging. The Spanish foreign minister immediately cut loose with a resounding blast at the United Nations which reliably can be depended upon to alienate a sizable part of the good will toward Spain which exists in this country.

Among other tactical sentiments expressed by this gentleman, Alberto Martin Artajo, were these: "damages" are now due to Spain for the losses suffered as a result of the U.N. ban during the period of "stupid and unjust isolation;" this "reparation" is necessary because Spain had to get along with her own means "while

neighbors were getting economic aid."

We are not suggesting that the Spanish Government should be all trembling with gratitude because the U.N. has at last gotten around to acknowledging the completely unworkable character of its anti-Spanish policy. But all this business about "damages" and "reparation" is almost unbelievably stupid public relations on the international plane.

Since it is the United States that has been picking up all the checks for economic aid to Spain's neighbors in the postwar years, Artajo's statements apparently amount to a demand that the United States should now consider itself obligated to make reparation for all the Marshall Plan aid which Spain hasn't gotten during this period.

A man in Artajo's position certainly should be expected to know something about public opinion in the United States. He should know with what difficulty the whole idea of economic aid to other countries has been sold to the American people. The opponents of the Marshall Plan, the "Operation Rathole" school of thought, are still very much on the scene and still have a very substantial backing.

Yet in the face of this situation the Spanish foreign minister comes along with his demands for "reparation" and "damages." The American people generally wouldn't tolerate this

sort of thing even from a nation with whom they have always had the best and most cordial relations, to say nothing of a country with whom we are just now attempting to get back on a normal diplomatic footing and whose government has been the center of the most violent and bitter public argument.

We have never been among the enthusiastic admirers of the writings of Mr. Dale Carnegie but at the moment we would be tempted to make a contribution toward the purchase of several copies of "How To Win Friends and Influence People" as presents for Mr. Artajo and his colleagues.—THE RECORD, Louisville, Ky., Nov. 11, 1950.

Where Does "Life" Stand?

LIFE magazine for October 16 had a special issue entitled *U. S. Schools: They Face a Crisis*. The issue was a giant one of 192 pages; 102 of which were of advertising, and the remaining 90 of text and pictures.

The editors gave over their editorial space—this time of two solid pages—to an article *Our Schools Have Kept Us Free*, by Henry Steele Commager of Columbia, in which reference was made to "the great Northwest Ordinance of 1787: 'Religion, morality and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools

and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.'" Prof. Commager comes to this conclusion, at the end of his long article: "For a century and a half American schools have served and strengthened the Commonwealth. They provided a citizenry as enlightened as any on earth."

The state of American public school, secular college and university education, as portrayed in *Life's* pages, shows that a direct contradiction exists between the presumptions of the Northwest Ordinance and Prof. Commager's conclusion—a contradiction which evidently did not bother either Prof. Commager or the editors of the magazine.

This contradiction was, however, made crystal clear in a splendid article in the same issue by Episcopal Canon Bernard Iddings Bell, entitled *Know How vs. Know Why*. Canon Bell's final section, *A Nation of Religious Illiterates*, is of surpassing excellence. He is aware of the importance of religious education in general, and of the Catholic contribution in particular.

In the U. S. at the present time there are over 900 senior colleges and universities. Of these, 29 of the universities are Catholic, and 158 of the colleges. Yet, *Life* found virtually no place to notice either our Catholic colleges or universities.

The only mention this giant issue of *Life* gave to religious schools was

to show the hood of a doctor of philosophy of Catholic University, and to make two of the twenty questions in a Roper Survey deal with religion in education and State aid to religious education. In addition to the Catholic colleges and universities mentioned above, there are 145 major Catholic seminaries—i.e. of college and university grade—in the U.S., but they, of course, are nowhere alluded to.

In one section of its coverage, *Life* asked the student governing bodies of fifty-two leading U. S. colleges to nominate the outstanding teachers on their faculties." As a result, it gave portraits and sketches of eight whom it dubbed Great Teachers. *Life* does not deign to say what standards it used to determine which of the 900 are the leading 52 colleges, nor how you poll students of 52 colleges to ask which are *their* great teachers, and then arrive at eight as a total. Are there no great teachers on the faculties of Catholic University, Notre Dame, Fordham, Georgetown and St. Louis? Yet among the eight chosen were professors of colleges some of whose alumni have

recently been unveiled as spies and traitors.

The indecision of the arrangers of this issue of *Life*, with its fine article by Canon Bell, and its otherwise total devotion to secularism in American education, is disappointing, to say the least. It reminds one of the similar indecision in a recent issue, which carried a beautiful article by Ann Morrow Lindbergh on the Abbey of Our Lady of Risk, and a picturization of the current vulgar stage production, "Peep Show."

Life has often claimed to be the most potent editorial force in America. Whether this be true or not, it is time that the editors of *Life* woke up to the responsibilities of journalism, and the duties of true patriotism. It is time that *Life* stopped fooling around with the intelligence of its readers, and took a stand for honest, decent, responsible Americanism. If the editors want to know how to do just that, they have only to read and follow the criticism and advice of their own author, Canon Bernard Iddings Bell.—THE CATHOLIC MIRROR, Springfield, Mass., November, 1950.



Sex Instruction

We are convinced that it is up to our Catholic Parent-Teacher Association groups to work out in practical detail plans and material for parent education on the matter of sex instruction. If Catholic parents don't do their job, we are left in a decidedly awkward position in our protests against transferring responsibility to the schools.—THE RECORD, Louisville, Ky., Nov. 25, 1950.

Documentation

Menti Nostrae

HIS HOLINESS, POPE PIUS XII

*Unofficial English text of the Apostolic Exhortation
dated September 23, 1950.*

**VENERABLE BRETHREN AND BELOVED SONS,
HEALTH AND THE APOSTOLIC BLESSING.**

INTRODUCTION

THE words of the Divine Redeemer to Peter kept ringing in our ear: "Simon, son of John, dost thou love me more than these do? . . . feed my lambs, feed my sheep" (John 21, 15 and 17); and also those words spoken by the same Prince of the Apostles exhorting the Bishops and priests of his time: "Tend the flock of God which is among you . . . becoming from the heart a pattern to the flock" (1 Peter 5, 2 and 3).

Carefully pondering over these words, We deem it the chief duty of our supreme ministry to do our utmost to help to make the work of pastors and priests daily more efficacious in encouraging the faithful to avoid evil, to overcome dangers and to acquire perfection. This is all the more necessary in our days when people, as a result of the recent terrible war, are not only harassed by serious material difficulties but are suffering in the depths of their souls while the enemies of Catholicism becoming bolder, owing to the state of civil society, are striving with satanic hate and alluring snares to separate men from God and Jesus Christ.

The necessity for this Christian renewal which all men of good will appreciate urges us to turn in a special way to the priests of the whole world because We know that their humble, vigilant and painstaking work among the people, whose difficulties, sufferings and bodily as well as spiritual needs they realize, is capable of restoring morals through the practice of the precepts of the Gospel and of establishing firmly on earth the Kingdom of Christ, "a Kingdom of justice, love and peace" (Preface, Mass of Christ the King).

But the priesthood cannot in any way procure the full effects which are demanded by the needs of the present time unless the priests shine forth among the people with the marks of sanctity, as worthy "ministers of Christ," faithful "dispensers of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 3, 9) and ready for every noble work (2 Tim. 3, 17).

We think there is no more fitting way in which We can show our gratitude to the clergy of the world who, on the occasion of our golden jubilee as a priest, offered so many prayers to God on our behalf, than by exhorting all the clergy in fatherly manner to attain that sanctity of life without which their ministry cannot be fruitful. We desire that the first fruit of the Holy Year, which We proclaimed for the renewal of morals in keeping with the teachings of the Gospel, should be that the leaders of the faithful strive to acquire greater perfection so that in turn the renewal of their flock in the spirit of Jesus Christ may be assured.

It must be recalled that even though the increasing needs of Christian society more urgently demand personal holiness in priests, they are already obliged by the very nature of the high ministry confided to them by God to work unceasingly for their own sanctification always and everywhere.

As our predecessors taught, especially Pius X (*Ex. haer. animo: Acta Pii X*, vol. 14, p. 237) and Pius XI (*Litt. Encyc. Ad Catholici sacerdotii, AAS [Acta Apostolicae Sedis]* 27, 1936, 5) and as We made reference to in the encyclicals *Mystici Corporis* (AAS. 35, 1943, 193) and *Mediator Dei* (AAS 39, 1947, 521), the priesthood is a great gift of the Divine Redeemer, Who, in order to perpetuate the work of redemption of the human race which He completed on the Cross, confided His powers to the Church, which He wished to be a participator in His unique and everlasting Priesthood.

The priest is like "another Christ" because he is marked with an indelible character making him a living image of our Saviour. The priest represents Christ Who said: "As the Father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20, 21); "he who hears you, hears me" (Luke, 10, 16). He undertakes this most sublime ministry by a divine vocation and "is appointed for men in the things pertaining to God, that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins" (Heb. 5, 1). To him must come anyone who wishes to live the life of Christ and who desires to receive strength, comfort and nourishment for his soul; from him the salutary medicine must be received by anyone who wishes to rise from sin and lead a good life. Hence all priests may apply to themselves with full right the words of the Apostle of the Gentiles: "We are God's helpers" (1 Cor. 3, 9).

This lofty dignity demands from priests that they react to their exalted office with the strictest fidelity. Since they are destined to promote the glory of God on earth and to cherish and increase the Mystical Body of Christ, they must be outstanding by the sanctity of their lives in order that through them the "fragrance of Christ" be spread everywhere (2 Cor. 2, 15).

Beloved sons, on the very day that you were raised to the sacerdotal dignity, the Bishop, in the name of God, solemnly pointed out to you your fundamental duty in the following words: "Understand what you do, imitate the things you deal with; and celebrating the mystery of the death of the Lord, strive to mortify in your members all vice and concupiscence. May your doctrine be the spiritual medicine for the people of God; let the

fragrance of your life of virtue be an ornament of the Church of Christ; and by your preaching and example may you build the house, that is the family of God" (*Pontif. Rom.*, for the Ordination of a Priest). Your life, which should be completely immune from sin, should be even more hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3, 3) than the lives of the layfolk. Thus, adorned with that high virtue which your dignity demands, can you advance to the office of completing the redemption of man to which your priestly ordination calls you.

This is the undertaking which you have freely and spontaneously assumed; be holy because your ministry is holy.

I. SANCTITY OF LIFE

According to the teaching of the Divine Master, the perfection of Christian life consists in the love of God and of one's neighbor (Matt. 22, 37, 38 and 39), a love that is fervent, deliberate and operative. If it has these qualities, it can be said to embrace all virtues (1 Cor. 13, 4, 5, 6 and 7); and can rightly be called the "bond of perfection" (Col. 3, 14). In whatever circumstances a man is placed he should direct his intentions and his actions towards this end.

However, the priest is bound to do this in a particular manner. By its very nature every priestly action necessarily tends to this end since the priest is called to this by divine vocation, destined for it by a divine duty and confirmed by a divine grace. For he must cooperate with Christ, the only and eternal Priest; he must follow Him and imitate Him Who during His life on earth had no other purpose than to show us His most ardent love for His Father and to bestow on men the infinite treasures of His Heart.

IMITATION OF CHRIST

The first striving of a priestly soul should be the closest union with the Divine Redeemer by accepting humbly and entirely the Christian doctrine and by diligently applying it in every moment of his life so that his faith illumines his conduct and his conduct is the reflection of his faith.

Led by the light of this virtue, let him keep his eyes fixed on Christ. Let him follow closely His teaching, His actions and His example, convincing himself that it is not sufficient for him to accomplish the duties enjoined on the ordinary faithful. He must always strive with increasing efforts to tend to perfection of life in keeping with the high dignity of the priesthood according to the warning of the Church: "clerics ought to lead a holier life than lay people and they should be an example to them by their virtue and their actions" (*Code of Canon Law*, can. 124).

The priestly life, since it arises from Christ, should always and in everything be directed towards Him. Christ is the Word of God and did not disdain to assume human nature. He lived a life on earth in order to obey the will of the Eternal Father. He spread around Himself the fragrance of an immaculate life of virtue. He lived in poverty, and "went

about doing good and healing all who were in the power of the devil" (Act. 10, 38). Finally, He offered Himself as a victim for the salvation of His brethren. That, beloved sons, is the summary of the wonderful life proposed to you. Strive with all your strength to reproduce it in yourselves and recall His words of exhortation: "For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you also should do" (John 13, 15).

The beginning of Christian perfection stems from humility. "Learn from Me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matt. 11, 29). The consideration of the high dignity to which we are called by Baptism and Holy Orders and the knowledge of our own weakness ought to induce us to meditate on the words of Christ: "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15, 5).

Let the priest not trust in his own strength nor be complacent in his own gifts nor seek the esteem and praise of men, but let him imitate Christ, Who did not come "to be served but to serve" (Matt. 20, 28), let him deny himself according to the teaching of the Gospel (Matt. 16, 24), detaching himself from the things of the earth in order to follow the Divine Master more easily. Whatever he has, whatever he is, is due to the goodness and power of God. If he wishes to glory in this, let him remember the words of the Apostle of the Gentiles: "For myself I will glory in nothing save in my infirmities" (2 Cor. 12, 5).

HUMILITY AND OBEDIENCE

The spirit of humility, illumined by faith, disposes the soul to the immolation of the will by means of obedience. Christ Himself established in the society He founded a legitimate authority which is a continuation of His own. Hence he who obeys his superiors is obeying the Redeemer Himself.

In an age like ours, in which the principle of authority is grievously disturbed, it is absolutely necessary that the priest, keeping the precepts of faith firmly in mind, should consider and accept this same authority, not only as the bulwark of the social and religious order, but also as the foundation of his own personal sanctification. While the enemies of God, with criminal astuteness, are trying to incite and solicit people's unruly passions, to make them rise up against Holy Mother Church, We wish to give due praise to, and animate with paternal encouragement that vast army of ministers of God who, in order to manifest openly their Christian obedience and to preserve intact their fidelity to Christ and to the legitimate authority established by Him, "have been counted worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus" (Acts 5, 41), and not only disgrace, but persecutions and prison and even death.

The priest has as the proper field of his activity everything that pertains to the supernatural life, that he may promote the increase of this supernatural life and communicate it in the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ. Consequently, it is necessary that he renounce "the things of the world," in order to have care only for "the things of the Lord" (I Cor. 7, 32).

and 33). And it is precisely because he should be free from preoccupation with worldly things to dedicate himself entirely to the divine service, that the Church has established the law of celibacy, thus making it ever more manifest to all peoples that the priest is a minister of God and the father of souls. By his law of celibacy, the priest, so far from losing the gift and duties of fatherhood, rather increases them immeasurably, for, although he does not beget progeny for this passing life of earth, he begets children for that life which is heavenly and eternal.

As much as priestly chastity is more resplendent, so much more does the sacred minister become, together with Christ, "a pure victim, a holy victim, an immaculate victim" (*Missale Rom.*, can.).

In order to preserve faithfully unstained this inestimable treasure of our chastity, it is suitable and necessary to be obedient to that exhortation of the Prince of the Apostles, which we daily repeat in the Divine Office, "Be ye sober, and watch" (I Peter 5, 8).

Yes, watch, beloved sons, because priestly chastity is exposed to many dangers, whether by reason of laxity in public morals, or because of the allurements of vice which you find so easily seductive in these days, or, finally, because of that excessive liberty which is always trying to intrude itself into the relations between the two sexes, and which would even wish to enter into the exercise of the sacred ministry. "Watch and pray" (Mark 14, 38), mindful that your hands touch those things which are most holy, that you have been consecrated to God and are to serve Him alone. The very habit which you wear reminds you that you should live not to the world, but to God. Make every effort possible, therefore, with alacrity and burning zeal, trusting in the protection of the Virgin Mother of God, to preserve yourselves, "clean, unstained, pure and chaste, as becomes the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God" (*Pont. Rom.*, for the Ordination of a Deacon).

To this end, we direct to you a special exhortation as regards your direction of associations and sodalities of women, that you show yourselves as becomes a priest; avoid every familiarity; when you must give your services, give them in a way that is befitting sacred ministers. Moreover, in directing these associations, let your participation be limited to the demands of the sacred ministry.

To the detachment of your will and of yourselves in your generous obedience to Superiors, and to your renouncement of earthly pleasures in your chastity, you must also unite a detachment of your hearts from riches and from the things of earth. We earnestly exhort you, dear brethren, not to attach your affections to the perishable, transitory things of this earth. Take as your models those great saints of ancient and modern times who joined this essential detachment from material goods to a profound trust in Divine Providence and a most ardent priestly zeal. As a result, they produced works that are truly marvelous, confiding solely in God, Who, assuredly, is never found wanting in our needs. Even the priest who does not make a profession of poverty by a special vow must always be guided

by the spirit and love of this virtue: a love that ought to show itself in the simplicity and modesty of his manner of life, in his living quarters, and in his generosity towards the poor. In a most special way, let him abhor from mixing himself in economic enterprises, enterprises which would impede the fulfillment of his pastoral duties, and lessen the respect which is due to him from the faithful. Since it is the office of the priest to spend every effort to obtain the salvation of souls, he should always be prepared to apply to himself those words of St. Paul, "I do not seek yours, but you" (II Cor. 12, 14).

There would be many things We might have said on virtues a priest ought to practise to reproduce in himself, to the best of his powers, the Divine Exemplar that is Jesus Christ. But We chose to concentrate our attention on those things which seemed to be specially necessary in our times. Enough that We now recall to your minds the words of that golden book, the *Imitation of Christ*: "The priest should be adorned with all the virtues, and give an example to others of a righteous life. Let his conversation be not according to the common and vulgar ways of men, but with the angels and with men that are perfect" (*De Imit. Chr.*, IV, c.5, v. 13, 14).

NECESSITY OF GRACE FOR SANCTIFICATION

Everyone knows, beloved brethren, that it is impossible for a Christian, and in a special way, a priest, to imitate the admirable example of the Divine Master without the help of grace, and without the use of those instruments of grace which He Himself has placed at our disposition: a use which is as much more necessary as the grade of perfection to which we are bound to attain is higher, and as the difficulties which arise from our natural inclination to evil are greater. For this reason, We judge it opportune to make a passing review of certain other truths, as sublime as they are consoling, from which should appear still more clearly how deep should be the sanctity of the priest, and how efficacious are the helps given to us by the Lord to enable us to fulfill in ourselves the designs of His divine mercy.

As the whole life of the Saviour was ordained to the sacrifice of Himself, so the life of the priest, which should reproduce in itself the image of Christ, ought also to be with Him, and through Him, and in Him, a pleasing sacrifice.

Indeed, the sacrifice which the Lord made upon Calvary was not only the immolation of His Body. He offered Himself, a Victim of expiation, as the Head of the human race, and therefore, "while commanding His Spirit into the hands of the Father, He commands Himself to God as man, in order to commend to Him all mankind" (St. Athan., *De Incarn.*, n. 12; Migne, P.G. 26, 1003).

The very same thing occurs in the Sacrifice of the Eucharist, which is the unbloody renewal of the Sacrifice of the Cross. Christ offers Himself to the Father for His glory and for our salvation. And in so far as He,

the Priest and Victim, acts in His capacity as Head of the Church, He offers and immolates not only Himself, but all the faithful, and in a certain manner, all of mankind (St. August., *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. 10, cap. 6, Migne, P.L. 41, 284).

Now if this holds true for all the faithful, much more does it hold for priests, who are the ministers of Christ, principally by reason of their celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. And precisely in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, when "in the person of Christ" he consecrates bread and wine, which become the Body and Blood of Christ, the priest can draw from that same fountain of the supernatural life the inexhaustible treasures of salvation and all those helps which he needs for himself personally and for the fulfillment of his mission.

Being in such close contact with the divine mysteries, the priest cannot but be hungry and thirsty after justice (Mat. 5, 6), or not feel inspired to assimilate his life to his exalted dignity, and direct the same towards that sacrifice in which he must needs offer and immolate himself with Christ. Consequently, he will not merely celebrate Holy Mass, but will live it out intimately in his daily life. In no other way can he obtain that supernatural vigor which will transform him and make him a sharer in the life of sacrifice of the Redeemer.

ST. PAUL AND CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

St. Paul sets down as the basic principle of Christian perfection the precept, "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 13, 14). Again if this precept applies to all Christians, it applies in a particular way to priests. But putting on Jesus Christ does not mean merely adapting one's mind to His doctrine. It means that a person enters upon a new life which, to be sure, was resplendent in glory on Thabor, but which, above all, should be conformed to the sufferings and trials of our patient Redeemer on Calvary. This involves long and arduous labor, by which the soul is transformed to the state of victim, in as much as it participates intimately in the sacrifice of Christ.

However, this arduous and assiduous labor is not to be accomplished through empty velletie, nor achieved through mere desires and promises; it must be an indefatigable and continuous exercise which aims at a fruitful renovation of spirit; it must be an exercise of piety which refers all things to the glory of God; it must be an exercise of penance which dominates and controls the movements of the soul; it must be an act of charity which inflames the soul with love of God and the neighbor, and which effectuates works of mercy; it must, in fine, be that active and ready willingness by which we strive and struggle to accomplish whatsoever is most perfect.

The priest should, therefore, study to reproduce in his own soul the things that are effected upon the Altar. As Jesus Christ immolates Himself, so His minister should be immolated with Him; as Jesus expiates the sins of men, so he, by following the hard road of Christian asceticism,

should labor at the purification of himself and of others. Hence the admonition of St. Peter Chrysologus: "Be you the priest and the sacrifice of God; do not lose that which has been given to you by the authority of God. Clothe yourself with the garment of sanctity, gird yourself with the cincture of chastity; let Christ be the covering for your head; let the cross of Christ be the protection before your face; instil in your breast the sacrament of divine wisdom; let the odor of your prayers always ascend upon high; let your heart be, as it were, an altar, on which you may safely offer your body as a victim to God . . . Offer Him your faith, that perfidy be destroyed; offer Him your fasting, that gluttony may cease; offer a sacrifice of your chastity, that passion may die; place on the Altar your piety, that impiety be put away; call upon mercy that avarice may be overcome; and that folly may disappear, the immolation of sanctity is called for. In this way shall your body be also your victim, if it has not been wounded by any dart of sin" (Serm. 108: Migne, P.L. 52, 500-501).

We wish to repeat here in a special manner for priests what We have already proposed to the meditation of all the faithful in the Encyclical, *Mediator Dei*: "It is true, of course, that Jesus Christ is priest, yet not for Himself, but for us, that He might present to the Eternal Father the desires and holy aspirations of the whole human race; Jesus is victim, but for us, substituting Himself for sinful man; now the words of the Apostle, 'let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,' requires that all Christians reproduce in themselves, as far as human power can achieve, the same state of mind which the Divine Redeemer had when He made the sacrifice of Himself: humble submission of spirit, which means adoration, honor, praise and gratitude to the Supreme Majesty of God; moreover, it requires that they reproduce in themselves the condition of victim; abnegation of themselves according to the precepts of the Gospel, the voluntary and spontaneous practice of penance, sorrow and expiation for their sins. It requires, in a word, our mystical death with Christ on the Cross, in such wise that we can say with Paul, 'I am fixed to the Cross with Christ'" (AAS [39] 1947, 552, 553).

Priests and beloved sons, we hold in our hands a great treasure, a precious pearl, the inexhaustible riches of the Blood of Jesus Christ. Let us use them even to prodigality, so that, by the complete sacrifice of ourselves offered with Christ to the Eternal Father, we may become, in truth, mediators of justice, "in the things which appertain to God," (Heb. 5, 1), and that we may deserve to have our prayers accepted and obtain a superabundance of grace for the whole Church and for the souls of all men, that they may be strengthened and refreshed. Only after we have become one being with Christ, the Mediator of His own and of our oblation, and have raised our voice in union with the choir of the inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem, as we read, "we join ourselves in song with them, our hopes in Holy Sion" (Brev. Rom., Hymn, pro Dedic. Eccl.), only then, strengthened by the virtue of our Savior, shall

we be able to descend in safety from the heights of sanctity to which we have attained, to bring to all men the life and the light of God by means of our priestly ministry.

THE DIVINE OFFICE

Perfect sanctity also demands a continual communication with God; and because this intimate contact which the priestly souls should enjoy with God ought never be interrupted in the succession of days and hours, the Church obliges the priest to recite the Divine Office. In this manner, she has been faithfully obedient to the injunction of the Lord, "That they must always pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18, 1).

Just as the Church herself never ceases praying, so she ardently desires that her children should do the same, repeating the words of the Apostle: "Through Him, therefore, let us offer up a sacrifice of praise always to God, that is, fruit of lips, praising His name" (Heb. 13, 15). To priests, she has committed the duty of consecrating to God, praying also in the name of the people, every period of the day and every circumstance of life.

Conforming himself to this disposition, the priest continues to do down the course of the ages that which Christ Himself had done, who "in the days of His earthly life, with a loud cry and tears, offered up prayers and supplications . . . and was heard because of His reverent submission" (Heb. 5, 7). This prayer has a singular efficacy because it is done in the name of Christ, "through our Lord Jesus Christ," who is our Mediator with the Father, presenting to Him incessantly His own satisfaction, His merits and the infinite price of His Blood. It is truly "the voice of Christ," who "prays for us as our Priest, prays among us as our Head" (St. Aug., *Enarr. in Ps. 85*, n.l; Migne, P.L. 37, 1081). By the same token, it is always "the voice of the Church," which takes up the sentiments and desires of all the faithful who unite their voices to the faith of the priest, in praising Jesus Christ, and through Him, render thanks to the Eternal Father, obtaining from him the assistance which they need in their lives every day and every hour. In this wise there is repeated by means of the priests what Moses did on Mount Sinai, when, with his arms lifted up to heaven, he spoke to God and received from Him mercy and favor for his people, who labored in the valley below in their pains.

Moreover, the Divine Office is a most efficacious means of sanctification. Certainly it is not a mere recitation of formularies or of artistically executed chants; for it is not just a question of respect for certain norms, called rubrics, or for external ceremonies of worship; it is above all a matter of elevating the mind and heart to God, in unison with the harmony of the blessed spirits (*Mediator Dei*, AAS [39] 1947, 574); an elevation which presupposes those interior dispositions recalled at the beginning of the Divine Office, that it should be recited, "worthily, attentively, with devotion."

Consequently, the priest ought to pray with the same intention as the Redeemer, so that his voice is, as it were, the voice of the Lord who, by means of the priest, continues to implore clemency of the Father for the benefits of the Redemption. It is that voice of the Lord with which are associated the armies of the angels and saints in heaven and of all the faithful on earth, to render due glory to God. It is that same voice of Christ our Advocate by which we receive the immense treasure of His merits.

Meditate with attention on these fertile truths which the Holy Spirit has disclosed to us in the Sacred Scriptures and upon which the writings of the Fathers and Doctors are commentaries. As your lips repeat the words dictated by the Holy Spirit, try not to lose anything of this great treasure, and that your souls may be responsive to the voice of God, put away from your minds whatever might distract you and recollect your thoughts with all effort and zeal, that you may thus more easily and with greater fruit attend to the contemplation of the eternal truths.

In Our Encyclical *Mediator Dei*, We have explained at great length how the liturgical cycle recalls and represents in orderly fashion during the year the mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ and commemorates the feasts of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints. Those lessons, which We there imparted to all the people because they are eminently useful for all, should be especially meditated upon by you, the priests; you, who with the Sacrifice of the Eucharist and the Divine Office play such an important role in the development of the liturgical cycle.

DAILY MEDITATION

In order that her priests might progress with all possible speed on the road of sanctity, the Church heartily recommends to them, besides the celebration of Mass and the recitation of the Divine Office, also other exercises of piety. Regarding these, it is in place here to propose certain points for your consideration.

Above all else, the Church exhorts us to the practice of meditation, which raises the mind to the contemplation of heavenly things, which guides it on the path to God, and which makes it live in that supernatural atmosphere of thought and affection which is the best preparation before and the most fruitful thanksgiving after the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Meditation also disposes the soul to savor and to comprehend the beauties of the liturgy, and leads us to the contemplation of the eternal verities, and of the marvelous examples and teachings of the Gospel.

It behooves the sacred ministers, therefore, to strive to reproduce in themselves the example and virtues of the Redeemer, as traced in the Gospels. However, just as the food of the body does not nourish, sustain or develop our life unless, after being digested and assimilated, it be changed into our own substance, so the priest cannot acquire dominion over himself and his senses, cannot purify his spirit, cannot grow—as

he should—in virtue, cannot, in brief, fulfil with alacrity and with fruit the duties of his sacred ministry, unless he has penetrated deeply, through assiduous and unceasing meditation, into the mysteries of the Divine Redeemer, the supreme model of the priestly life and the inexhaustible font of sanctity.

We therefore consider it our grave duty to exhort you to the practice of daily meditation, a practice recommended to the clergy also by Canon Law, (Cf. Code of Canon Law, can. 125 §2). For just as the desire for priestly perfection is nourished and strengthened by daily meditation, so the omission and neglect of this practice is the source of tepidity of spirit, through which piety is lessened and grows languid, and the impulse towards personal sanctification is not only weakened or ceases altogether, but the entire priestly ministry suffers great harm. It must therefore be stated without reservation that no other means has the unique efficacy of meditation, and that, as a consequence, its daily practice can in no wise be substituted for.

OTHER DEVOTIONS

From mental prayer cannot be separated vocal prayer, and those other forms of private prayer which, according to each one's peculiar needs, help in uniting the soul with God. Let this be remembered, however: more than a mere multiplicity of prayers, is to be valued piety and the true and ardent spirit of prayer. If ever before, in our days this ardent spirit of prayer is specially necessary, when the so-called "naturalism" has invaded men's minds and hearts, so that virtue is exposed to every kind of danger, dangers which not infrequently meet one in the very exercise of his ministry. Is there anything which can more securely protect you against these snares, anything which can more surely elevate your souls to heavenly things and keep them united with God than assiduous prayer and supplication for Divine help?

In as much as priests can be called by a very special title sons of the Virgin Mary, they will never cease to love her with an ardent piety, invoke her with perfect confidence, and frequently implore her strong protection. So that every day, as the Church herself recommends (Cf. C.I.C., can. 125, §2), they will recite the Holy Rosary, which, by proposing for our meditation the mysteries of the Redeemer, leads us to Jesus through Mary.

Also, before closing his day's work, the priest will betake himself to the Tabernacle, and remain there for some time to adore Jesus in the Sacrament of His love, to make reparation for the ingratitude of so many men, to enkindle in himself ever more the love of God, and to remain, in some sense, even during the time of repose at night, which recalls to our minds the silence of death, in the presence of His Most Sacred Heart.

Let him also not omit his daily examination of conscience, which is the most efficacious means we have for taking account of the conduct of our spiritual life during the day, for removing the obstacles which hinder

or retard one's progress in virtue, and, finally, for determining on the most suitable means to assure to our sacred ministry greater fruitfulness and to implore from the Heavenly Father indulgence upon our miseries.

This indulgence and the remission of our sins is given to us in the Sacrament of Penance, the masterpiece of God's goodness by which our weakness is fortified. Let it never be said that the very minister of this Sacrament of reconciliation, himself does not use it. The Church, as you know, declares as follows in this respect: "Let the Ordinaries be vigilant to see that all their clergy frequently cleanse the stains of their conscience in the Sacrament of Penance" (C.I.C., can. 125, §1). Though we are the ministers of Christ, we are, nevertheless, wretched and weak. How then can we ascend to the Altar and handle the Sacred Mysteries unless we have made an effort to cleanse ourselves as often as possible? By means of frequent Confession, "the right knowledge of one's self is increased, Christian humility is developed, perverse moral habits are uprooted, negligence and spiritual torpor are resisted, the conscience is purified, the will is fortified, salutary direction of conscience is obtained, and an increase of grace is secured by the very fact that the Sacrament is received" (*Mystici Corporis*, AAS [34] 1943, 235).

Still another recommendation is in place here: that in undertaking and advancing in the spiritual life you do not trust to yourselves, but with docile simplicity you seek and accept the help of someone who, with wise moderation, can guide your soul, point out to you the dangers, suggest suitable remedies, and in every internal and external difficulty can guide you in the right way towards an ever greater perfection, according to the example of the saints and the teachings of Christian asceticism. Without this prudent guide for one's conscience, it is ordinarily very difficult to be duly responsive to the impulses of the Holy Spirit and of the grace of God.

Finally, We wish to recommend heartily to all the practice of the Spiritual Exercises. When we seclude ourselves for some days from our accustomed occupations and habitual environment, and retire into solitude and silence, we are then more attentive to give ear to the voice of God, which consequently penetrates more deeply into our soul. The Exercises, while they call us to a more diligent fulfillment of the duties of our ministry, through contemplation on the Mysteries of the Redeemer, give new strength to our will, that we may "serve Him without fear, in holiness and justice before Him all our days" (Luke, 1, 74, 75).

II. THE HOLINESS OF THE SACRED MINISTRY

The Redeemer's Side was opened on Mount Calvary and from it flowed His Precious Blood running like a torrent in flood through the centuries to cleanse men's consciences, expiate their sins, impart to them the treasures of salvation.

It is the priests who are destined to carry out this mystery so sublime. Not only do they procure and communicate Christ's grace to the members of His Mystical Body, but they are also the organs whereby this Mystical

Body develops because they must ever give the Church new sons, bring them up, educate them and guide them. Priests are the "servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. IV, 1): therefore they must serve Jesus Christ with perfect charity and consecrate all their strength to the salvation of their brethren. They are the apostles of light: therefore they must illuminate the world with the teachings of the Gospel and be so strong in faith as to be able to communicate it to others, and follow the example and doctrine of the Divine Master in order to lead everyone to Him. They are the apostles of grace and pardon: therefore they must consecrate themselves entirely to the salvation of men and draw them to the altar of God in order that they may nourish themselves with the bread of eternal life. They are the apostles of charity: therefore they must promote works of charity, all the more urgent today when the needs of the indigent have grown enormously.

INSTRUCTION OF THE FAITHFUL

The priest must also strive to see that the faithful have a correct understanding of the doctrine of the "Communion of Saints," and that they feel and live it. For this purpose let him engage in such activities as the apostolate of the liturgy and the apostolate of prayer. Then he must promote all those forms of the apostolate which today, on account of the special needs of the Christian people, are so very important and urgent. Let him, therefore, labor for the diffusion of instruction in the Catechism, the development and diffusion of Catholic Action and missionary action, and, with the assistance of well prepared and trained laymen, let him increase those projects of the social apostolate which are demanded by our time.

Yet the priest must remember that the closer he is united to Christ and guided in his activities by the spirit of Christ, the more fruitful his ministry will be. In this case, his activity will not be reduced to a purely natural movement or business which tires the body and the mind and draws the priest himself away from the right path, a danger both to himself and the Church. But his work and his labors will be fruitful and corroborated by those gifts of grace that God denies to the crowd but concedes generously to those working humbly in "the vineyard of the Lord," not seeking themselves and their own interests (I Cor. X, 33) but the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Hence, faithful to the teaching of the Gospel, let him not trust in himself and in his own strength but let him place his faith in the help of the Lord. "So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God Who gives the growth" (I Cor. III, 7).

When the apostolate is directed and inspired in this manner, it is impossible that the priest should not attract the souls of everyone to himself with an almost divine strength. If he reproduces in his habits and his life a living image of Christ, all those who turn to him as a master will recognize, thanks to some inward conviction, that the words he speaks are not his but God's and that he does not act of his own

accord but by the virtue of God. "If anyone speaks, let it be as with words of God. If anyone ministers, let it be as from the strength that God furnishes . . ." (I Peter IV, 11). In striving towards holiness and in exercising his ministry with the greatest diligence, the priest must spend himself to represent Christ so perfectly as, in all modesty, to be able to repeat the words of the Apostle of the Gentiles, "Therefore I beg you, be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (I Cor. IV, 16).

For these reasons, while giving due praise to those who in this troublesome aftermath of war, urged by the love of God and of doing good to their neighbor under the guidance and following the example of their Bishops, have consecrated their entire strength to the relief of so much misery, We cannot abstain from expressing our preoccupation and our anxiety for those who on account of the special circumstances of the moment have become so engulfed in the vortex of external activity that they neglect the chief duty of the priest, his own sanctification. We have already stated publicly in writing (AAS 36, 1944, 239 epist. *Cum proxime exeat*) that those who presume that the world can be saved by what has been rightly called "the heresy of action" must be made to exercise better judgment. The heresy of action is that activity which is not based upon the help of grace and does not make constant use of the means necessary to the pursuit of sanctity given us by Christ. In the same way, nevertheless, We have urged on to the activities of the ministry those who, shut up in themselves and almost diffident of the efficacy of divine aid, do not labor to the best of their ability to make the spirit of Christianity penetrate daily life in all those ways demanded by our times (Address of September 12, 1947).

SALVATION OF SOULS

We earnestly exhort you, therefore, to labor with all solicitude for the salvation of those whom Providence has entrusted to your care, closely united to the Redeemer with whose aid we can do all things (Phil. IV, 13). How ardently We desire, O beloved sons, that you emulate those saints who in past times, by their great deeds, have shown the might of Divine Grace. May you one and all, in humility and sincerity, always be able to attribute to yourselves—with your spiritual charges as witnesses—the words of the Apostle: "But I will most gladly for my part spend and be spent myself for your souls." (II Cor. XII, 15). Enlighten the minds, guide the consciences, comfort and sustain the souls who are struggling with doubt and groaning with sorrow. To these forms of apostolate, add also all those others which the needs of the times demand. But let it always be clear to everybody that the priest in all his activities seeks nothing beyond the good of souls, strives toward no one but Christ, to whom he consecrates his energies and his whole self.

In the same way that, in order to urge you to personal sanctification, We have exhorted you to reproduce in yourselves the living image of Christ, so now for the sanctifying efficacy of your ministry We excite you

to follow the example of the Redeemer. Full of the Holy Ghost, He "went about doing good and healing all who were in the power of the devil; for God was with Him." (Acts X, 38). Strengthened by the same Spirit and encouraged by His Strength, you will be able to exercise a ministry which, nourished by Christian charity, will be rich in Divine virtue and capable of communicating this virtue to others. May your zeal be animated by that charity which bears everything with peace of mind, which does not let itself be overcome by adversity, and which embraces all, rich and poor, friends and enemies, faithful and unfaithful. This daily effort and exercise of patience is demanded of you by souls for whose salvation Our Savior patiently suffered grief and torment unto death in order to restore us to the Divine Friendship. This is, and well you know it, the greatest good of all. Do not allow yourselves, therefore, to be carried away by the immoderate desire for success, do not allow yourselves to be dismayed if after assiduous labor you do not gather the desired fruits. "One sows, another reaps" (John IV, 37).

CHRISTLIKE CHARITY

Furthermore, let your zeal shine with benign charity. If it be necessary—and it is everyone's duty—to fight error and repel vice, the soul of the priest must be ever open to compassion. Error must be fought with all our might, but the brother who errs must be loved intensely and brought to salvation. How much good have the saints not done, how many admirable deeds have they not performed by their kindness even in environments penetrated by lies and degraded by vice? Of a truth, he who to please men gloses over their evil inclinations or is indulgent about their incorrect ways of thinking or acting, thereby prejudicing Christian teaching and integrity of morals, is betraying his ministry. But when the teachings of the Gospel are preserved and those who stray are moved by the sincere desire to return to the right path, the priest must remember the reply of Our Lord to St. Peter, when he asks Him how many times he must forgive his neighbor. "I do not say to thee seven times, but seventy times seven" (Matthew, 18, 22).

The object of your zeal must not be earthly and transient things but things eternal. The resolution of priests aspiring to holiness must be this: to labor solely for the glory and the salvation of souls. How many priests, even in the straightened circumstances of our time, have taken the example and the warnings of the Apostle of the Gentiles as a rule of conduct? The Apostle of the Gentiles was content with the indispensable minimum. ". . . but having food and sufficient clothing, with these let us be content." (I Tim. VI, 8).

Through this disinterestedness and this detachment from earthly things worthy of the highest praise, in conjunction with trust in Divine Providence, the priestly ministry has given the Church ripe fruits of spiritual and social good.

Finally, this industrious zeal must be illuminated by the light of wis-

dom and discipline and inflamed by the fire of charity. Whoever sets before himself his own sanctification and that of other people must be equipped with solid learning that comprises not only theology but also a healthy and up-to-date education in secular matters; so that, like a good father, he may draw "from his storeroom things new and old" (Matthew XIII, 52) and make his ministry always more appreciated and fruitful. In the first place, let your activities be inspired by and remain faithful to the prescriptions of this Holy See and the directives of your Bishops. May it never happen, beloved sons, that all those new forms of the apostolate, so opportune today especially in regions where the clergy is not sufficiently numerous, remain dead or, through bad direction, not be responsive to the needs of the faithful.

May your zeal, therefore, increase every day, sustain the Church of God, be an example to the faithful, and constitute a powerful bulwark against which the assaults of the enemies of God are broken!

We desire to express in a particular way our satisfaction with those priests who, in humility and burning charity, labor for the sanctification of their brethren as counsellors, confessors, or spiritual directors. The incalculable good they render the Church remains hidden for the greater part, but it will one day be revealed in the Kingdom of Divine Glory.

Not many years ago, with intimate satisfaction of our mind, We decreed the honors of the altar to the Turinese priest, Giuseppe Caffasso, who, in a most difficult period, was the wise and holy spiritual guide of not a few priests whom he helped to progress in virtue and whose sacred ministry he rendered particularly fruitful. We are fully confident that through his powerful patronage the Divine Redeemer will raise up many priests of like sanctity, who will bring themselves and their brethren to such a height of perfection in their lives that the faithful, admiring their example, will feel themselves moved spontaneously to imitate it.

III. PRACTICAL RULES

Up to the present we have set forth the chief truths and the basic principles on which the Catholic priesthood and the exercise of its ministry are founded. In daily practice, all holy priests conform diligently to these truths and principles; while all those who have deserted or renounced the priesthood have violated the obligations contracted by sacred ordination.

Now, however, in order that this our paternal exhortation be more efficacious, We deem it opportune to indicate in greater detail some of the things which refer to the practice of daily life. This is all the more necessary because in modern life there are a number of situations and problems presented in a new way demanding more diligent examination and more attention. It is our intention, therefore, to exhort all priests, especially Bishops, to expend their solicitude in promoting all that is necessary in our times and correcting all who withdraw from the right path.

After the long and varied upheavals of the recent war, the number of priests both in Catholic countries and in the missions has fallen behind ever-growing needs. For this reason, We exhort all priests, both those of the diocesan clergy and those belonging to religious orders or congregations, to go forward, bound close together with bonds of fraternal charity, in union of strength and will, toward the common goal: the good of the Church, personal sanctification and the sanctification of the faithful. All, even Religious who live apart from the world and in silence, must contribute to the efficacy of the priestly apostolate with prayer, sacrifice and also with action, in so far as they can.

But it is also necessary to recruit new workers, with the help of divine grace. Therefore, We draw the attention especially of the Ordinaries and those engaged in the care of souls to this most important question, which is intimately connected with the future of the Church. It is true that the Church will never lack the priests necessary for its mission. Nevertheless, it is necessary to be watchful, mindful of the words of Our Lord, "the harvest indeed is abundant but the laborers are few" (Luke 10, 2), and to be as diligent as possible in giving the Church numerous and holy ministers.

Our Lord Himself shows us the surest way of having numerous vocations, "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest" (*ibid.*) : humble prayer trusting in God.

But it is also necessary that the souls of those called by God be prepared for the impulse and the invisible action of the Holy Ghost. The contribution that Christian parents, parish priests, confessors, superiors of seminaries, priests, and all the faithful who have the needs and the increase of the Church at heart can give is precious to this end. Let the ministers of God seek not only by preaching and catechetical instruction but also in private conversations to dissipate the prejudices now so widespread against the priestly state by showing its lofty dignity, its beauty, its necessity and its great merit. Every Christian mother and father, whatever their social status, must pray to God to make them worthy to have at least one of their children called to His service. Finally, all Christians must feel the duty to encourage and aid those who feel called to the priesthood.

The choice of candidates for the priesthood recommended by Canon Law (Canon 1353) to pastors of souls must be the particular task of all priests, who not only have to render humble and generous thanks to God for the inestimable gift they have received, but in like manner must hold nothing dearer or more pleasing than to find and prepare a successor for themselves among those young men whom they know to be equipped with the necessary qualifications. To succeed more efficaciously in this, every priest must make an effort to be and to show himself an example of the priestly life, which for the young men whom he approaches and among whom he looks for signs of the divine call can constitute an ideal for imitation.

This personal and prudent selection must go on always and in all places not only among the young men who are already in the seminary but also among those who are studying elsewhere, and particularly among those who partake in the various activities of the Catholic apostolate. These last, even though they join the priesthood at a later age, are often equipped with greater and more solid virtues because they have already been tried and have strengthened their souls by contact with the difficulties of life and have already collaborated in a field which is also the realm of priestly activity.

But it is always necessary to examine individual aspirants to the priesthood with diligence, to ascertain the intentions and the reasons with which they have taken this resolution. Particularly, when it is a question of boys, it is necessary to find out if they are furnished with the necessary moral and physical qualifications, and whether they aspire to the priesthood solely for its dignity and the spiritual profit of themselves and other people.

You know, venerable brethren, what are the conditions of moral fitness the Church requires in young men who aspire to the priesthood. We deem it superfluous to detain you with this subject. On the other hand, We call your attention to the conditions of physical fitness, all the more so because the recent war has left deadly traces and disturbed the young generation in a number of ways. Let the physical qualifications of the candidates, therefore, be examined with particular attention and, where necessary, let there be recourse to examination by a prudent doctor.

With this choice of vocations made with zeal and prudence, We trust that there will arise on all sides a numerous and chosen force of candidates for the priesthood.

THE CARE OF VOCATIONS

Many pastors are preoccupied with the decrease of vocations and are no less disturbed when it is a question of handling the young men who have already entered the seminary. We are aware, venerable brethren, how arduous this labor is and how many difficulties it presents. But the carrying out of so serious a duty will give you the greatest consolation insofar as, as our predecessor Leo XIII said, "From the cares and solicitude imposed by the training of priests, you will have results most ardently to be desired and you will experience that your episcopal office will be easier in its exercise and much more fruitful in its results" (Encyclical Letter *Quod Multum* to the Hungarian Bishops, August 22, 1886, *Acta Leonis*, VI, 158).

We deem it opportune, therefore, to give you some rules suggested by the necessity, greater today than ever, of training holy priests.

In the first place, it is necessary to remember that pupils in minor seminaries are adolescents separated from the natural environment of the family. It is necessary, therefore, that the life the boys lead in the seminaries correspond as far as possible to the normal life of boys. Great

importance will be given to spiritual life, but in a manner suited to their capacity and their degree of development. Everything must be carried out in a healthy and calm atmosphere. Nevertheless, even here it must be observed that "the just measure is moderation" in order that it does not happen that those who have to be trained to sacrifice and the evangelical virtues "live in sumptuous houses with attendance paid to their taste and comfort," (ALL of November 25, 1948, and AAS, XL, 1948, 552).

Particular attention must be paid to character formation in the case of each boy by developing in him the sense of responsibility, the capacity to use his judgment and the spirit of initiative. For this reason, directors of seminaries must use moderation in the employment of coercive means, gradually lightening the system of rigorous control and restrictions as the boys grow older, by helping the boys themselves to stand on their own feet and to feel responsibility for their own actions. Directors should give a certain liberty of action in some kinds of projects, habituating their pupils to reflect so that the assimilation of theoretical and practical truths may become easier for them. Let directors have no fear in keeping the pupils in contact with the events of the day, which apart from furnishing them with the necessary material for forming and expressing a good judgment can form material for discussions to help them and accustom them to form judgments and reach balanced conclusions.

In this way young men are put on the path of honesty and loyalty, of esteem for firmness and uprightness of character and aversion for every kind of duplicity. The more they are sincere and upright, the better can they be known and guided by their superiors in the difficult task of examining vocations.

If young men—especially those who have entered the seminary at a tender age—are educated in an environment too isolated from the world, they may, on leaving the seminary, find serious difficulty in their relations with both the ordinary people and the educated laity, and it may happen that they either adopt a misguided and false attitude toward the faithful or that they consider their training in an unfavorable light. For this reason, it is necessary to diminish gradually and with due prudence the separation between the people and the future priest in order that when he receives Holy Orders and begins his ministry, he will not feel himself disorientated—a thing that would not only be harmful to his soul but also injure the efficacy of his work.

Another serious duty of superiors is the intellectual training of students. You have in mind, venerable brethren, the orders and dispositions given by this Apostolic See on this subject and We Ourselves from our first meeting with the students of the seminaries and colleges of Rome at the beginning of our pontificate have recommended these directives to all. (Address of July 14, 1939, AAS, XXXI, 1939, 245-251).

In the first place We urge that the literary and scientific education of future priests be at least not inferior to that of laymen who take similar courses of study. In this way, not only will the seriousness of intellectual training be assured but the choice of subjects also will be facilitated.

Seminarians will feel themselves freer in the choice of their vocation and there will be warded off the danger that, through lack of sufficient cultural preparation which can assure a position in the world, one or the other student may feel himself in some way driven to take a path that is not his by following the reasoning of the unfaithful steward: "To dig I am not able, to beg I am ashamed" (Luke 16, 3). If, then, it should happen that some student about whom good hopes were formed for his entering the Church should leave the seminary, this must not be a source of pre-occupation, because later on the young man who succeeds in finding his path will not be able to forget the benefits received in the seminary and by his activity will be able to make a notable contribution to the work of the Catholic laity.

In the intellectual training of young seminarians—although other studies, especially those relating to social questions, so necessary today, should not be overlooked—the greatest importance must be given to philosophical and theological teaching "according to the rule of the Angelic Doctor" (cf. Codex of Canon Law, Canon 1366, 2) brought up to date and adapted to meet modern errors. Study of these subjects is of maximum importance and usefulness both for the spiritual good of the priest himself and for the people. The masters of the spiritual life state that the study of the sacred sciences, provided they be imparted in the right way and according to correct systems, is a most efficacious help in preserving and nourishing the spirit of faith, checking the passions, and maintaining the soul united to God. It must be added that the priest who is the "salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Matthew 5, 13 and 14) must labor for the defense of the Faith by preaching the Gospel and refuting the doctrinal errors opposed to it which are disseminated today among the people by every possible means. But these errors cannot be efficaciously fought if the unassailable principles of Catholic philosophy and theology are not thoroughly known.

In this connection, it is not out of place to recall that the scholastic method is of particular efficacy in giving clear concepts and showing how doctrines entrusted as sacred deposit to the Church, teacher of Christians, are organically connected and clear. Today, there is no lack of those who, departing from the teachings of the Church and overlooking clarity and precision of ideas, not only depart from the healthy scholastic method but open the way to errors and confusion, as sad experience shows.

In order to prevent wavering and uncertainty where ecclesiastical studies are concerned, We exhort you, venerable brethren, to watch carefully that the precise rules laid down by this Apostolic See for such studies be faithfully received and translated into action.

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL TRAINING

If, with so much solicitude, We have recommended solid intellectual training among the clergy, it is easy to understand how much We have at heart the spiritual and moral training of young clerics, without which

even outstanding knowledge remains fruitless and can even bring incalculable harm on account of pride which enters in the heart. Therefore, the Church primarily and anxiously wishes that in seminaries solid foundations be laid for the holiness that the minister of God must develop and practice all his life.

As We have already said in the case of priests, so now We recommend that clerics should have a sincere and deep conviction of the necessity of the spiritual life and feel the duty of making every effort to acquire it, to preserve it and to increase it continuously.

In the course of the day, following the more or less uniform program, clerics perform a number of religious practices and take part in different exercises of piety. There is ready danger that the external exercises of piety may not be accompanied by an interior movement of the soul, a defect which can become habitual and even grow worse when outside the seminary, the minister of God being pressed by an often overwhelming need for activity.

For this reason, let every care be given to the training of young people for the interior life, which is the life of the spirit and according to the spirit. Let them do everything in the light of the Faith and in union with Christ, convinced that this is a serious duty of conscience for him who one day must receive the priestly character and represent the Divine Master in the Church. For seminarians, the interior life is the most efficacious means of acquiring the priestly virtues, the spontaneous strength coming from the firm conviction that overcomes difficulties and urges them to carry out holy resolutions.

Those who are responsible for the moral training of seminarians must always aim at seeing that they acquire all the virtues the Church demands in priests. Of these virtues We have already spoken in another part of this Exhortation and, therefore, We do not intend to return to the subject. But We cannot refrain from indicating and recommending among all virtues that aspirants to the priesthood must firmly possess those upon which the moral structure of the priest is built, as upon solid pillars.

CONFORMITY WITH GOD'S WILL

It is necessary that young men acquire the spirit of obedience by accustoming themselves to submit their own will sincerely to that of God manifested through the legitimate authority of the superiors. Nothing can be lamented more in the conduct of the future priest than that it is not in conformity with the Will of God. This obedience must always be inspired by the perfect model, the Divine Teacher, Who on earth had but one single program, "to do thy will" (Heb. 10, 7).

From the seminary on, the future priest must learn to give filial and sincere obedience to superiors in order to be always ready later on to obey his Bishop docilely according to the teaching of the unsurpassed Confessor of Christ, Ignatius of Antioch: "Obey ye all the bishop as Jesus Christ obeyed the Father" (*Ad Smyrnaeos*, VIII, 1: Migne, P. G. VIII, 14).

"He who honors the bishop is honored by God." "He who works without being known to the bishop, serves the devil" (*ibid.* 9, 1, 714, 715). "Do nothing without the bishop, keep your body like the temple of God, love union, flee discord, be an imitator of Jesus Christ as He was an imitator of His Father" (*Ad Philadelphienses*, VII, 2: Migne, P. G. V, 700).

Every care and solicitude must be used to have seminarians appreciate, love and preserve chastity, because the choice of the priestly state and perseverance in it depend in great part on this virtue. Being exposed to greater dangers, chastity must be solidly possessed and proved at length. Let seminaries, therefore, inform themselves about the nature of ecclesiastical celibacy, of the chastity that they must observe and of the obligations it brings with it (Codex of Canon Law, Canon 132), and then let them learn of the dangers they may meet. Let them take heed to defend themselves against these dangers from a tender age, having recourse faithfully to the means offered by Christian asceticism for bridling the passions, because the more strongly and efficaciously they control them, the further the soul will progress in the other virtues and the surer the fruit of their priestly ministry. Hence, whenever young seminarians show evil tendencies in this regard and, after a due trial, show themselves incorrigible, it is absolutely necessary to dismiss them from the seminary, at least before they receive Holy Orders.

These and all the other priestly virtues can be easily acquired and firmly possessed by seminarians if from the beginning they have acquired and cultivated a sincere and tender devotion to Jesus present "truly, really and substantially" in our midst in the Sacrament of His Love. They will make of Him, present in the Blessed Sacrament, the inspiration and the end of all their actions, of their aspirations and of their sacrifices. And if to devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament they unite filial devotion to Mary, are full of trust in her, abandon themselves to her and urge their souls to imitate her virtues, then the Church will be happy, because the fruit of an ardent and zealous ministry can never be wanting in a priest whose adolescence has been nourished with the love of Jesus and Mary.

Here We cannot refrain from strongly recommending you, venerable brethren, to take particular care of the young cleric.

The passage from the sheltered and tranquil life of the seminary to the active ministry may be dangerous for the priest who enters the open field of the apostolate if he has not been sufficiently prepared for the new life. The many hopes placed in young priests may fail if they are not gradually introduced to the work, wisely watched and paternally guided in the first steps of their ministry.

We approve, therefore, the gathering of young priests when possible for some years in special institutions where, under the guidance of experienced superiors, they can develop their piety and perfect themselves in sacred studies and be put on the path toward that form of the ministry more closely corresponding to their temperaments and aptitudes.

For this reason We would like to see institutions of this nature estab-

lished in every diocese or, according to circumstances, for a number of dioceses together.

In the case of our beloved City, We Ourselves did this when, on the 50th anniversary of our priesthood, We erected the St. Eugene Institute for young priests (AAS, XLI, 1949, 165).

We exhort you, venerable brethren, to avoid so far as it is possible placing still inexperienced priests in full pastoral activity or sending them into places far removed from the See of the diocese or from other larger centers. In this situation—isolated, inexperienced, exposed to dangers, lacking prudent advisors—they themselves and their ministry would certainly suffer harm.

It is particularly recommended that young priests be placed with some parish priest, for in this way, with the guidance of older people, they can more easily adjust themselves to the sacred ministry and perfect the spirit of piety.

We remind all pastors of souls that the future of newly ordained priests is to a great extent in their hands. The burning zeal and the generous resolutions with which they are animated at the beginning of their ministry can be spent and certainly weakened by the example of their seniors if these latter do not shine with the splendor of virtue or if, under the pretext of not changing old customs, they show themselves inclined to ease.

COMMUNITY LIFE

We approve and strongly recommend what is already the wish of the Church (Canon 134) that the custom of community life be introduced and extended among the priests of the same parish or of nearby parishes.

If the practice of community life brings with it some sacrifice, there is, however, no doubt that great advantages derive from it. In the first place it daily nourishes the zeal and spirit of charity among the priests. Then, it gives an admirable example to the faithful of the detachment of the ministers of God from their own interests and from their families. Finally, it is a testimony of the scrupulous care with which they safeguard priestly chastity.

Moreover, priests must cultivate study as Canon Law wisely prescribes. "Clerics must not suspend their studies, especially those of a sacred nature, after having received the priesthood" (Canon 129). The Codex, besides requiring that examinations be undergone "at least every year for three years" (Canon 130, I) where new priests are concerned, also prescribes that the clergy should hold meetings several times a year "to promote knowledge and piety" (Canon 131, I).

To encourage these studies, sometimes rendered difficult by the precarious economic conditions of the clergy, it would be most opportune if Ordinaries, according to the splendid tradition of the Church, were to restore dignity and efficiency to cathedral, collegiate and parochial libraries.

Despite the despoiling and dispersal they have undergone, many ecclesi-

astical libraries often possess a precious heritage of parchments, of books in manuscript or print, "eloquent testimony of the activity and influence of the Church, of the faith and generous piety of our ancestors, their studies and their good taste" (Letter of Cardinal P. Gasparri to the Bishops of Italy, April 15, 1923. *Ench. clericorum*, Typ. Pol. Vat. 1937, 613).

These libraries must not be neglected receptacles for books but living structures with a room for reference and reading. Above all, however, let them be up to date and enriched with works of every kind, especially those relating to the religious and social questions of our times, so that teachers, parish priests and particularly young priests may find there the doctrine necessary for diffusing the truth of the Gospel and for fighting error.

IV. CURRENT PROBLEMS

Finally, venerable brethren, We deem it our office to give you a warning about the difficulties proper to our time.

You are already aware that among priests, especially those less equipped with doctrine and of less severe lives, a certain spirit of novelty is being diffused in an ever graver and more disturbing manner.

Novelty is never in itself a criterion of truth and it can be worthy of praise only when it confirms the truth and leads to righteousness and virtue.

The age in which we live suffers from serious errors in every field: philosophical systems which are born and die without improving morals in any way; monstrosities in certain arts which even pretend to call themselves Christian; standards of government in many countries that succeed rather in oppressing the citizen than in promoting the common good; methods of living and economic and social relations which threaten honest men more than the cunning. From this it follows almost naturally that there are not lacking in our times priests, infected in some way by this contagion, who express opinions and follow a mode of life, even in dress and the care of their person, alien to both their dignity and their mission; priests who allow themselves to be led astray by the mania for novelty whether it be in their preaching to the faithful or in combatting the errors of adversaries; priests who compromise not only their consciences but also their good name and the efficacy of their ministry.

We earnestly call your attention to all this, venerable brethren, confident that between widespread passion for the new and exaggerated attachment to the past you will use a prudence which is circumspect and vigilant even when it tries fresh paths of activity and struggle for the triumph of the truth. We are far from holding that the apostolate must not be in keeping with the reality of modern life and that projects adapted to the needs of our time should not be promoted. But since the whole apostolate carried on by the Church is by its essence under the control of the Bishops, new forms must not be introduced save with the Ordinary's approval. Ordinaries of one and the same region or one and the same

country must strive in this matter to establish an understanding among themselves in order to provide for the needs of their districts and to study the methods best suited to and in keeping with the modern apostolate.

In this way, all will be done in an orderly and disciplined manner and the efficacy of priestly action will be assured. Let everyone be persuaded of this: that it is necessary to follow the voice of God and not that of the world, and to regulate the activity of the apostolate according to the directives of the Hierarchy and not according to personal opinions. It is a vain illusion to think oneself able to hide one's own inner poverty and still cooperate effectively in spreading the Kingdom of Christ by novelties in his external methods.

THE CLERGY AND THE SOCIAL QUESTION

Similarly, a correct attitude is required with regard to the social doctrine of our times.

There are some who show themselves fearful and uncertain when faced with the wickedness of Communism, which aims to rob of their faith the very ones whom it promises material prosperity. But documents recently issued by this Holy See have shown clearly the way to be followed, the path from which no one must stray unless he wishes to fail in his duty.

Others show themselves no less timid and uncertain in the face of that economic system which derives its name from the excessive amassing of private wealth [excessive, or exaggerated, capitalism].¹ the serious effects of which the Church has never ceased to denounce. The Church has not only indicated the abuses of capital and the right to property promoted and defended by this system, but has insisted just as much that capital and private property must be instruments of production for the benefit of the whole of society and the means of sustaining and defending the freedom and dignity of the human person. Errors of both economic systems and the harmful results deriving from them must convince everyone, especially priests, to remain faithful to the social teaching of the Church and to spread a knowledge and practical application of it. This teaching is the only one that can remedy the evils We have denounced, evils which are spread abroad in such a lamentable manner. This teaching unites and perfects the demands of justice and the duties of charity and promotes a social order which does not oppress individuals and isolate them in a blind selfishness but unites everyone in harmonious relations and the bond of fraternal solidarity.

¹Phrase in brackets inserted by translator. The preceding phrasing is a literal translation of the official Latin text. Because the Italian translation appearing in *l'Osservatore Romano* used the word "capitalism" while the Latin did not, the N.C.W.C. News Service requested a precise explanation of the meaning of the Latin phrase. Msgr. Antonio Bacci, secretary of the Vatican Secretariate for Briefs to Princes, said that what was intended by the Latin phrase was "excessive or exaggerated capitalism." Monsignor Bacci heads the Secretariate that is charged with the preparation in Latin of documents committed to it by the Pope.

Following the example of the Divine Master, the priest must go out to meet the poor, the working class, all those who are in difficulties and misery, which includes also many of the middle class and not a few brother priests. But he must not overlook those who, although well off as far as worldly goods are concerned, are often the poorest in soul and have need of being called to spiritual renovation in order to do as did Zacchaeus. "I give one-half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold" (Luke 19, 8). Where struggling society is concerned, therefore, the priest must never lose sight of the purpose of his mission. Zealously and fearlessly, he must explain the Catholic principles about property, wealth, social justice and Christian charity among the different classes and give to all an obvious example of their application.

Ordinarily, the carrying out of these Christian social principles in public life is the task of the laity, but where no capable lay Catholics are found, the priest should make every effort to train some adequately.

THE POOR CLERGY

This subject gives us the opportunity of saying a word about the economic conditions in which during the postwar period very many priests find themselves, especially those in regions which have felt more seriously the consequences of the war and of the political situation brought about by the recent conflict. This state of affairs distresses us profoundly and We leave nothing undone in order to relieve to the best of our ability the hardship, misery and extreme want experienced by many.

You especially, venerable brethren, are well aware how, in places of extreme need, We intervened through the Sacred Congregation of the Council by giving extraordinary faculties to the Bishops to eliminate glaring economic inequalities between priests of the same diocese. We observe that in many places priests have answered their Pastor's call in a praiseworthy manner. In other places, it has not been possible to carry out fully the regulations laid down because of serious difficulties encountered.

For this reason, We exhort you to continue in paternal fashion on the path you have taken and to notify us of the results of your efforts, for it is inadmissible that the worker who has labored and still labors in the vineyard of the Lord should go without his daily bread.

Moreover, venerable brethren, We strongly praise all joint efforts you make so that priests not only do not lack for their daily needs but also have assurance that their future is provided for, following the social security system which is already in force for other classes of society, which We praise so much and which assures proper assistance in case of sickness, invalidism and old age. In this way you will relieve the anxieties of priests about an insecure future.

In this connection, We express our paternal satisfaction with all those priests who even at considerable sacrifice have helped and still help their brethren, especially the sick and aged.

By acting in this manner, they give a shining proof of that mutual charity which Jesus Christ has laid down as the distinctive mark of His disciples. "By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13, 35). We trust that these ties of brotherly love will become ever closer between priests of all nations, so that it may become ever more obvious that the ministers of God, the Universal Father, are united by the bond of charity, regardless of race.

But you will well understand that such a problem cannot be adequately resolved unless the faithful feel the obligation to help the clergy according to their ability and to take every step needed to achieve this end.

Therefore, instruct the faithful under your care on their obligation to help their priests in want. Our Lord's words always hold true: "The laborer deserves his wages" (Luke 10, 7). How can you expect fervent and energetic work from priests when they lack the necessities of life?

Those faithful who overlook this duty open the way, although involuntarily, to the Church's enemies, who in a number of countries seek to starve the clergy in order to deprive the people of their lawful pastors.

Public authorities also, according to the conditions prevailing in each country, have the duty of providing for the needs of the clergy, from whose activity society derives incalculable spiritual and moral benefits.

FINAL EXHORTATION

In closing our exhortation, We cannot refrain from recapitulating and repeating how much We desire to impress our words deeper and deeper in your minds as a program of life and work.

We are priests of Christ. Therefore, we must labor with all our strength to see that the fruits of His Redemption be most efficaciously applied to every soul. Consider the immense need of our time. We must make every effort to lead back to Christ those brethren who have strayed through error or been blinded by passions, to enlighten nations with the light of Christian doctrine, to guide them according to the precepts of the Gospel and to form in them more Christian consciences, and lastly to urge them to struggle for the triumph of truth and justice.

We shall reach our goal only when we have so sanctified ourselves that we are able to transmit to others the life we have received from Christ.

For this reason, We remind every priest of the words of the Apostle: "Do not neglect the grace that is in thee, granted to thee by reason of prophecy with the laying on of hands of the presbyterate" (I Tim. 4, 14). "Show thyself in all things an example of good works, in teaching, in integrity and dignity; let thy speech be sound and blameless, so that anyone opposing may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say of us" (Titus 2, 7 and 8).

Take the greatest heed of the grace of your vocation, beloved sons, and live it so as to produce abundant fruit for the edification of the Church and the conversion of her enemies.

In order that this our exhortation achieve the desired result, We repeat

these words to you with particular affection, words which, in view of the Holy Year, are more opportune than ever before: "But be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which has been created according to God in justice and holiness of truth" (Ephes. 4, 23 and 24). "Be you, therefore, imitators of God, as very dear children and walk in love, as Christ also loved us and delivered himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God to ascend in fragrant odor" (Ibid. 5, 1 and 2). "But be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord" (Ibid. 5, 18 and 19). "Be vigilant in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Ibid. 6, 18).

Reflecting upon these incentives given by the Apostle of the Gentiles, We think it opportune to suggest that during the course of this Holy Year you follow an extraordinary course of spiritual exercises so that, full of renewed fervor and piety, you can incite other souls to acquire divine indulgence.

Lastly, when you meet more serious difficulties in the path of holiness and the exercise of your ministry, turn your eyes and your mind trustfully to her who is the Mother of the Eternal Priest and therefore Mother of all Catholic priests. You are well aware of the goodness of this Mother. In many regions you have been the humble instruments of the mercy of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in reviving the faith and charity of the Christian people.

Our Lady loves everyone with a most tender love, but She has a particular predilection for priests, who are the living image of her Jesus. Take comfort in the thought of the love of the Divine Mother for each of you and you will find the labors of your sanctification and priestly ministry much easier.

To the Beloved Mother of God, mediatrix of heavenly graces, We entrust the priests of the whole world in order that, through her intercession, God will vouchsafe a generous outpouring of His Spirit, which will move all ministers of the altar to holiness and, through their ministry, will spiritually renew the face of the earth.

Trusting in the powerful patronage of the Immaculate Virgin Mary as far as the realization of these wishes is concerned, We implore an abundance of divine graces on all, but especially on the Bishops and priests who suffer persecution, imprisonment and exile because of their dutiful defense of the rights and the freedom of the Church. We express our most tender affection to them and exhort them paternally to continue to give an example of priestly courage and virtue.

May the Apostolic Blessing that We impart wholeheartedly to each and all of you, venerable brethren, and to all your priests, be the earnest of these heavenly graces and a proof of our paternal benevolence.

Given at Rome in St. Peter's on September 23 of the Holy Year, 1950, the twelfth year of Our pontificate.

PIUS PP XII

Munificentissimus Deus*

THE APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION
BY WHICH IS DEFINED THE DOGMA OF FAITH
THAT MARY, THE VIRGIN MOTHER OF GOD,
HAS BEEN ASSUMED INTO HEAVEN IN BODY AND SOUL

PIUS, THE BISHOP,

*Servant of The Servants of God,
For Everlasting Remembrance*

THE MOST BOUNTIFUL GOD, Who is Almighty, the plan of Whose Providence abides in wisdom and love, tempers in the secret purpose of His own mind the sorrows of peoples and of individual men by means of joys that He interposes in their lives from time to time, in such a way that, under different conditions and in different ways, all things may work together unto good for those who love Him.¹

Now, just like the present age, our pontificate is weighed down by ever so many cares, anxieties and troubles, by reason of very severe calamities that have taken place and by reason of the fact that many have strayed away from truth and virtue. Nevertheless We are greatly consoled to see that, while the Catholic Faith is being professed publicly and vigorously, piety towards the Virgin Mother of God is flourishing and daily growing more fervent, and that almost everywhere on earth it is showing indications of a better and a more holy life. Thus, while the Blessed Virgin is fulfilling in the most affectionate manner her maternal duties on behalf of those redeemed by the blood of Christ, the minds and the hearts of her children are being vigorously aroused to a more assiduous consideration of her prerogatives.

Actually God, Who from all eternity regards Mary with a most favorable and unique affection, has, "when the fulness of time was come,"² put the plan of His providence into effect in such a way that all the privileges and prerogatives He had granted to her in His sovereign generosity were to shine in her in a kind of perfect harmony. And, although the Church has always recognized this supreme generosity and the perfect harmony of graces and has daily studied them more and more throughout the course of the centuries, still it is in our own age that the privilege of the bodily Assumption into heaven of Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, has certainly stood forth most clearly.

That privilege has shone forth in new radiance since Our predecessor of immortal memory, Pius IX, solemnly proclaimed the dogma of the revered Mother of God's Immaculate Conception. These two privileges are most

¹Cf. Rom. 8: 28.

²Gal. 4: 4.

*Translated for the NCWC News Service by the Rev. Dr. Joseph Clifford Fenton, Editor of the *American Ecclesiastical Review*.

closely bound to one another. Christ overcame sin and death by His own death, and the man who is born again in a heavenly way through Baptism has conquered sin and death through Christ Himself. Yet, according to His general rule, God does not will to grant the full effect of the victory over death to the just until the end of time shall have come. And so it is that the bodies of even the just are corrupted, and that only on the last day will they be joined, each to its own glorious soul.

EXEMPTED FROM RULE

Now God has willed that the Blessed Virgin Mary should be exempted from this general rule. She, by an entirely unique privilege, completely overcame sin by her Immaculate Conception, and as a result she was not subject to the law of remaining in the corruption of the grave, and she did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of her body.

Thus, when it was solemnly proclaimed that Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, was from the very beginning free from the taint of original sin, the minds of the faithful were filled with a stronger hope that the day might soon come when the dogma of the Virgin Mary's bodily Assumption into heaven would also be defined by the Church's supreme teaching authority.

Actually it was seen that not only individual Catholics, but also those who could speak for nations or ecclesiastical provinces, and even a considerable number of the Fathers of the Vatican Council, urgently petitioned the Apostolic See to this effect.

During the course of time such postulations and petitions did not decrease but rather grew continually in number and in urgency. In this cause there were pious crusades of prayer. Many outstanding theologians eagerly and zealously carried out investigations on this subject either privately or in public ecclesiastical institutions and in other schools where the sacred disciplines are taught. Marian Congresses, both national and international in scope, have been held in many parts of the Catholic world. These studies and investigations have brought out into even clearer light the fact that the dogma of the Virgin Mary's Assumption into heaven is contained in the deposit of Christian faith entrusted to the Church. They have resulted in many more petitions, begging and urging the Apostolic See that this truth be solemnly defined.

In this pious striving, the faithful have been associated in a wonderful way with their own holy Bishops, who have sent petitions of this kind, truly remarkable in number, to this See of the Blessed Peter. Consequently, when We were elevated to the throne of the supreme pontificate, petitions of this sort had already been addressed by the thousands from every part of the world and from every class of people, from our beloved sons the Cardinals of the Sacred College, the Archbishops and the Bishops, from dioceses and from parishes.

Consequently, while We sent up earnest prayers to God that He might grant to our mind the light of the Holy Ghost to enable us to make a decision on this most serious subject, We issued special orders in which We

commanded that, by corporate effort, more advanced inquiries into this matter should be begun and that, in the meantime, all the petitions about the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven which had been sent to this Apostolic See from the time of Pius IX, our predecessor of happy memory, down to our own days should be gathered together and carefully evaluated.³

And, since We were dealing with a matter of such great moment and of such importance, We considered it opportune to ask all our venerable brethren in the episcopate directly and authoritatively that each of them should tell us what he thought in his own words. Hence, on May 1, 1946, We gave them our letter "Deiparae Virginis Mariae," a letter in which these words are contained: "Do you, Venerable Brethren, in your outstanding wisdom and prudence, judge that the bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin can be proposed and defined as a dogma of faith? Do you, with your clergy and people, desire that it should be?"

TRUTH REVEALED BY GOD

Those whom "the Holy Ghost has placed as bishops to rule the Church of God"⁴ gave an almost unanimous affirmative response to both these questions. This "outstanding agreement of the Catholic prelates and the faithful,"⁵ affirming that the bodily Assumption of God's Mother into heaven can be defined as a dogma of faith, since it shows us the concordant teaching of the Church's ordinary doctrinal authority and the concordant faith of the Christian people, which the same doctrinal authority sustains and directs, thus by itself, and in an entirely certain and infallible way, manifested this privilege as a truth revealed by God and contained in that divine deposit which Christ has delivered to His Spouse to be guarded faithfully and to be taught infallibly.⁶

Certainly this teaching authority of the Church, not by any merely human effort but under the protection of the Spirit of Truth,⁷ has carried out the commission entrusted to it, that of preserving the revealed truths pure and entire throughout every age, in such a way that it presents them undefiled, adding nothing to them and taking nothing away from them. For, as the Vatican Council teaches, "the Holy Ghost was not promised to the successors of Peter in such a way that, by His revelation, they might manifest new doctrine, but so that, by His assistance, they might guard as sacred and might faithfully propose the revelation delivered through the Apostles, or the deposit of faith."⁸

³Cf. Henrich-Von Moos, *Petitiones de Assumptione corporea B. Virginis Mariae in caelum definienda ad S. Sedem delatae*, 2 volumes (Vatican Polyglot Press, 1942).

⁴Acts, 20:28.

⁵The Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, in the *Acta Pii IX*, Pars I, Vol. 1, p. 615.

⁶Cf. The Vatican Council, Constitution *Dei Filius*, c. 4.

⁷Cf. John, 14: 26.

⁸Vatican Council, Constitution *Pastor aeternus*, c. 4.

Thus, from the universal agreement of the Church's ordinary teaching authority we have a certain and firm proof demonstrating that the Blessed Virgin Mary's bodily Assumption into heaven—which surely no faculty of the human mind could know by its own natural powers, so far as the heavenly glorification of the virginal body of the revered Mother of God is concerned—is a truth that has been revealed by God and consequently something that must be firmly and faithfully believed by all children of the Church. For, as the Vatican Council asserts, "all those things are to be believed by divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the written word of God or in tradition, and which are proposed by the Church, either in solemn judgment or in its ordinary and universal teaching office, as divinely revealed truths which must be believed."⁹

VARIOUS SIGNS

Various testimonies, indications and signs of this common belief of the Church are evident from remote times down through the course of the centuries; and this same belief becomes more clearly manifest from day to day.

Christ's faithful, through the teaching and the leadership of their pastors, have learned from the sacred books that the Virgin Mary, throughout the course of her earthly pilgrimage, led a life troubled by cares, hardships and sorrows, and that, moreover, what the holy old man Simeon had foretold actually came to pass, that is, that a terribly sharp sword pierced her heart as she stood under the cross of her divine Son, our Redeemer. In the same way, it was not difficult for them to affirm that the great Mother of God, like her only begotten Son, had actually passed from this life. But this in no way prevented them from believing and from professing openly that her sacred body had never been subject to the corruption of the tomb, and that the august tabernacle of the Divine Word had never been reduced to dust and ashes. Actually, enlightened by divine grace and moved by affection for her, God's Mother and our own sweetest Mother, they have contemplated in an ever clearer light the wonderful harmony and order of those privileges which the most provident God has lavished upon this revered associate of our Redeemer, privileges which reach such an exalted plane that, except for her, nothing created by God other than the human nature of Jesus Christ has ever attained this level.

The innumerable temples which have been dedicated to the Virgin Mary assumed into heaven clearly attest this faith. So do those sacred images, exposed everywhere for the veneration of the faithful, which bring this unique triumph of the Blessed Virgin before the eyes of all men. Moreover, cities, dioceses and individual regions have been placed under the special patronage and guardianship of the Virgin Mother of God assumed into heaven. In the same way, religious institutes, with the approval of the Church, have been founded and have taken their name from this privilege. Nor can We pass over in silence the fact that in the Rosary of Mary, the

⁹*Ibid., Dei Filius, c. 3.*

recitation of which this Apostolic See so urgently recommends, there is one mystery proposed for pious meditation which, as all know, deals with the Blessed Virgin's Assumption into heaven.

This belief of the sacred pastors and of Christ's faithful is manifested still more universally and splendidly by the fact that, since ancient times, there have been both in the East and in the West solemn liturgical offices commemorating this privilege. The holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church have never failed to draw enlightenment from this fact since, as everyone knows, the sacred liturgy, "because it is the profession, subject to the supreme teaching authority within the Church, of heavenly truths, can supply proofs and testimonies of no small value for deciding any individual point of Christian doctrine."¹⁰

TESTIMONY IN LITURGICAL BOOKS

In the liturgical books which deal with the feast either of the Dormition or of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, there are expressions that agree in testifying that, when the Virgin Mother of God passed from this earthly exile to heaven, what happened to her sacred body was, by the decree of divine providence, in keeping with the dignity of the Mother of the Word Incarnate, and with the other privileges she had been accorded. Thus, to cite an illustrious example, this is set forth in that Sacramentary which Adrian I, our predecessor of immortal memory, sent to the Emperor Charlemagne. These words are found in this volume. "Venerable to us, O Lord, is the festivity of this day on which the holy Mother of God suffered temporal death, but still could not be kept down by the bonds of death, who has begotten Thy Son Our Lord incarnate from herself."¹¹

What is here indicated in that sobriety characteristic of the Roman liturgy is presented more clearly and completely in other ancient liturgical books. To take one as an example, the Gallican Sacramentary designates this privilege of Mary's as "a sacrament beyond description," all the more worthy of being preached as the Virgin's Assumption is something unique among men. And in the Byzantine liturgy, not only is the Virgin Mary's bodily Assumption connected, time and time again, with the dignity of the Mother of God, but also with her other privileges, and in particular with the virginal motherhood granted her by a singular decree of God's providence. "God, the King of the universe, has granted thee favors that surpass nature. As He kept thee a virgin in childbirth, thus He has kept thy body incorrupt in the tomb and has glorified it by His divine act of transferring it from the tomb."¹²

The fact that the Apostolic See, which has inherited the function entrusted to the Prince of the Apostles, the function of confirming the brethren in the faith,¹³ has by its own authority made the celebration of this feast

¹⁰The encyclical *Mediator Dei* (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXIX, 541).

¹¹*Sacramentarium Gregorianum.*

¹²*Menaei totius anni.*

¹³Cf. *Luke*, 22: 32.

ever more solemn, has certainly and effectively moved the attentive minds of the faithful to appreciate always more completely the magnitude of the mystery it commemorates.

So it was that the feast of the Assumption was elevated from that rank which it had occupied from the beginning among the other Marian feasts to be classed among the more solemn celebrations of the entire liturgical cycle. And, when our predecessor St. Sergius I prescribed what is known as the litany, or the stational procession, to be held on the four Marian feasts, he specified, along with the feast of the Nativity, those of the Annunciation, the Purification and the Dormition of the Virgin Mary.¹⁴ Again, St. Leo IV saw to it that the feast, which was already being celebrated under the title of the Assumption of the Blessed Mother of God, should be observed in even a more solemn way when he ordered a vigil to be held on the day before it and afterwards prescribed prayers on the octave day. When this had been done, he decided to take part himself in the celebration, in the midst of a great multitude of the faithful.¹⁵ Moreover, the fact that a holy fast had been ordered from ancient times for the day prior to the feast is made very evident by what our predecessor S. Nicholas I testifies in treating of the principal fasts which "the Holy Roman Church has observed for a long time, and still observes."¹⁶

KNOWN AND ACCEPTED BY THE FAITHFUL

However, since the liturgy of the Church does not engender the Catholic faith, but rather springs from it, in such a way that the practices of the sacred worship proceed from the Faith as the fruit comes from the tree, it follows that the holy Fathers and the great Doctors, in the homilies and sermons they gave the people on this feast day, did not draw their teaching from the feast itself as from a primary source, but rather they spoke of this doctrine as something already known and accepted by Christ's faithful. They presented it more clearly. They offered more profound explanations of its meaning and nature, bringing out into sharper light the fact that this feast shows not only that the dead body of the Blessed Virgin Mary remained incorrupt, but that she gained a triumph out of death, her heavenly glorification after the example of her only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; truths that the liturgical books had frequently touched upon only briefly and in passing.

Thus St. John Damascene, an outstanding herald of this traditional truth, spoke out with powerful eloquence when he compared the bodily Assumption of the revered Mother of God with her other prerogatives and privileges. "It was fitting that she, who had kept her virginity intact in childbirth, should keep her own body free from all corruption even after death. It was fitting that she, who had carried the Creator as a child at her breast, should dwell in the divine tabernacles. It was fitting that the spouse, whom the

¹⁴ *Liber Pontificalis.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Responsa Nicolai Papae I ad consulta Bulgarorum.*

Father had taken to Himself, should live in the divine mansions. It was fitting that she, who had seen her Son upon the cross and who had thereby received into her heart the sword of sorrow which she had escaped in the act of giving birth to Him, should look upon Him as He sits at the right hand of the Father. It was fitting that God's Mother should possess what belongs to her Son, and that she should be honored by every creature as the Mother and as the Handmaid of God."¹⁷

These words of St. John Damascene agree perfectly with what others have taught on this same subject. Statements no less clear and accurate are to be found in sermons delivered by Fathers of an earlier time or of the same period, particularly on the occasion of this feast. And so, to cite some other examples, St. Germanus of Constantinople considered the fact that the body of Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, was incorrupt and had been taken up into heaven to be in keeping not only with her divine motherhood, but also with the special holiness of her virginal body. "Thou art she who, as it is written, appearest in beauty, and thy virginal body is all holy, all chaste, entirely the dwelling place of God, so that it is henceforth completely exempt from dissolution into dust. Though still human, it is changed into the heavenly life of incorruptibility, truly living and glorious, undamaged and sharing in perfect life."¹⁸ And another very ancient writer asserts: "As the most glorious Mother of Christ, our Saviour and God and the giver of life and immortality, has been endowed with life by Him, she has received an eternal incorruptibility of the body together with Him Who has raised her up from the tomb and has taken her up to Himself in a way known only to Him."¹⁹

When this liturgical feast was being celebrated ever more widely and with ever increasing devotion and piety, the Bishops of the Church and its preachers in continually greater numbers considered it their duty openly and clearly to explain the mystery that the feast commemorates, and to explain how it is intimately connected with the other revealed truths.

IN ACCORD WITH SCRIPTURE

Among the scholastic theologians there have been many who, wishing to inquire more profoundly into divinely revealed truths and desirous of showing the harmony that exists between what is termed the theological demonstration and the Catholic faith, have always considered it worthy of note that this privilege of the Virgin Mary's Assumption is in wonderful accord with those divine truths given us in Holy Scripture.

When they go on to explain this point, they adduce various proofs to throw light on this privilege of Mary. As the first element of these demon-

¹⁷St. John Damascene, *Encomium in dormitionem Dei Genetricis semperque Virginis Mariae*, Hom. II, n. 14; cf. also *ibid.*, n. 3.

¹⁸St. Germanus of Constantinople, *In Sanctae Dei Genetricis Dormitionem Sermo I.*

¹⁹The *Encomium in Dormitionem Sanctissimae Dominae Nostrae Deiparae semperque Virginis Mariae*, attributed to St. Modestus of Jerusalem, n. 14.

strations, they insist upon the fact that, out of filial love for His Mother, Jesus Christ has willed that she be assumed into heaven. They base the strength of their proofs on the incomparable dignity of her divine motherhood and of all those prerogatives which follow from it. These include her exalted holiness, entirely surpassing the sanctity of all men and of the angels, the intimate union of Mary with her Son, and the affection of pre-eminent love which the Son has for His most worthy Mother.

Often there are theologians and preachers who, following in the footsteps of the holy Fathers,²⁰ have been rather free in their use of events and expressions taken from Sacred Scripture to explain their belief in the Assumption. Thus, to mention a few of the texts frequently cited in this fashion, some have employed the words of the Psalmist: "Arise, O Lord, into thy resting place: thou and the ark, which thou hast sanctified";²¹ and have looked upon the *Ark of the Covenant*, built of incorruptible wood and placed in the Lord's temple, as a type of the most pure body of the Virgin Mary, preserved and exempted from all the corruption of the tomb and raised up to such glory in heaven. Treating of this subject, they also describe her as the Queen, entering triumphantly into the royal halls of heaven and sitting at the right hand of the divine Redeemer.²² Likewise they mention the Spouse of the Canticles "that goeth up by the desert, as a pillar of smoke of aromatical spices, or myrrh and frankincense" to be crowned.²³ These are proposed as depicting that heavenly Queen and heavenly Spouse who has been lifted up to the courts of heaven with the divine Bridegroom.

Moreover, the scholastic Doctors have recognized the Assumption of the Virgin Mother of God as something signified not only in various figures of the Old Testament, but also in that Woman clothed with the Sun whom John the Apostle contemplated on the Island of Patmos.²⁴ Similarly they have given special attention to these words of the New Testament: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed are thou amongst women,"²⁵ since they saw, in the mystery of the Assumption, the fulfillment of that most perfect grace granted to the Blessed Virgin and the special blessing that countered the curse of Eve.

Thus, during the earliest period of scholastic theology, that most pious man, Amadeus, Bishop of Lausanne, held that the Virgin Mary's flesh had remained incorrupt—for it is wrong to believe that her body has seen corruption—because it was really united again to her soul and, together with it, crowned with great glory in the heavenly courts. "For she was filled with grace and blessed among women. She alone merited to conceive the true God of true God, Whom as a virgin she brought forth, to Whom she gave

²⁰Cf. St. John Damascene, *op. cit.*, Hom. II, n. 11; and also the *Encomium* attributed to St. Modestus.

²¹*Psalm* 131: 8.

²²*Psalm* 44: 10, 14 ff.

²³*Cant.* 3: 6; cf. also 4: 8; 6: 9.

²⁴*Apoc.* 12: 1 ff.

²⁵*Luke*, 1: 28.

milk, fondling Him upon her breasts, and in all things waited upon Him with reverent care.”²⁶

Among the holy writers who at that time employed statements and various images and analogies of Sacred Scripture to illustrate and to confirm the doctrine of the Assumption, which they piously believed, the Evangelical Doctor St. Anthony of Padua holds a special place. On the feast day of the Assumption, while explaining the Prophet’s words: “I will glorify the place of my feet,”²⁷ he stated it as certain that the divine Redeemer had bedecked with supreme glory His most beloved Mother from whom He had received human flesh. He asserts that “you have here a clear statement that the Blessed Virgin has been assumed in her body, which was the place of the Lord’s feet. Hence it is that the holy Psalmist writes: ‘Arise, O Lord, into thy resting place: thou and the ark which thou hast sanctified.’” And he asserts that, just as Jesus Christ has risen from the death over which He triumphed and has ascended to the right hand of the Father, so likewise the ark of His sanctification “has risen up, since on this day the Virgin Mother has been taken up to her heavenly dwelling.”²⁸

ST. ALBERT THE GREAT AND OTHER DOCTORS

When, during the Middle Ages, scholastic theology was especially flourishing, St. Albert the Great who, to establish this teaching, had gathered together many proofs from Sacred Scripture, from the statements of older writers and finally from the liturgy and from what is known as theological reasoning, concluded in this way: “From these proofs and authorities and from many others, it is manifest that the most blessed Mother of God has been assumed above the choirs of angels. And this we believe in every way to be true.”²⁹ And in a sermon which he delivered on the sacred day of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s Annunciation, explaining the words “Hail, full of grace,” words used by the angel who addressed her, the Universal Doctor, comparing the Blessed Virgin with Eve, stated clearly and incisively that she was exempted from the fourfold curse that had been laid upon Eve.³⁰

Following the footsteps of his distinguished teacher, St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor, despite the fact that he never dealt directly with this question, nevertheless, whenever he touched upon it, always held, together with the Catholic Church, that Mary’s body had been assumed into heaven along with her soul.³¹

²⁶Amadeus of Lausanne, *De Beatae Virginis Obitu, Assumptione in caelum Exaltatione ad Filii dexteram.*

²⁷*Isaias*, 61: 13.

²⁸St. Anthony of Padua, *Sermones dominicales et in solemnitatibus, In Assumptione S. Mariae Virginis sermo.*

²⁹St. Albert the Great, *Mariale*, q. 132.

³⁰St. Albert the Great, *Sermones de Sanctis, Sermo XV in Annuntiatione B. Mariae; cf. also Mariale*, q. 132.

³¹Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theol.*, IIIa, q. 27, a. 1; q. 83, a. 5, ad 8; *Expositio salutationis angelicae; In Symb. Apostolorum expositio*, a. 5; *In IV Sent.*, d.12, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 3; d.43, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 1, 2.

Along with many others, St. Bonaventure, the Seraphic Doctor, held the same views. He considered it as entirely certain that, as God had preserved the Most Holy Virgin Mary from the violation of her virginal purity and integrity in conceiving and in childbirth, He would never have permitted her body to have been resolved into dust and ashes.³² Explaining these words of Sacred Scripture: "Who is this that cometh up from the desert, flowing with delights, leaning upon her beloved,"³³ and applying them in a kind of accommodated sense to the Blessed Virgin, he reasons thus: "From this we can see that she is there bodily . . . her blessedness would not have been complete unless she were there as a person. The soul is not a person, but the soul, joined to the body, is a person. It is manifest that she is there in soul and in body. Otherwise she would not possess her complete beatitude."³⁴

In the fifteenth century, during a later period of scholastic theology, St. Bernardine of Siena collected and diligently evaluated all that the medieval theologians had said and taught on this question. He was not content with setting down the principal considerations which these writers of an earlier day had already expressed, but he added others of his own. The likeness between God's Mother and her divine Son, in the way of the nobility and dignity of body and of soul—a likeness that forbids us to think of the heavenly Queen as being separated from the heavenly King—makes it entirely imperative that Mary "should be only where Christ is."³⁵ Moreover, it is reasonable and fitting that not only the soul and body of a man, but also the soul and body of a woman should have obtained heavenly glory. Finally, since the Church has never looked for the bodily relics of the Blessed Virgin nor proposed them for the veneration of the people, we have a proof on the order of a sensible experience.³⁶

The above-mentioned teachings of the holy Fathers and of the Doctors have been in common use during more recent times. Gathering together the testimonies of the Christians of earlier days, St. Robert Bellarmine exclaimed: "And who, I ask, could believe that the ark of holiness, the dwelling place of the Word of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, could be reduced to ruin? My soul is filled with horror at the thought that this virginal flesh which had begotten God, had brought Him into the world, had nourished and carried Him, could have been turned into ashes or given over to be food for worms."³⁷

In like manner St. Francis of Sales, after asserting that it is wrong to doubt that Jesus Christ has Himself observed, in the most perfect way, the divine commandment by which children are ordered to honor their parents,

³²Cf. St. Bonaventure, *De Nativitate B. Mariae Virginis*, sermo V.

³³Cant. 8: 5.

³⁴St. Bonaventure, *De Assumptione B. Mariae Virginis*, sermo. I.

³⁵St. Bernardine of Siena, *In Assumptione B. Mariae Virginis*, sermo II.

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷St. Robert Bellarmine, *Conciones habitae Lovanii*, n. 40, *De Assumptione B. Marie Virginis*.

asks this question: "What son would not bring his mother back to life and would not bring her into paradise after her death if he could?"³⁸ And St. Alphonsus writes that "Jesus did not wish to have the body of Mary corrupted after death, since it would have redounded to His own dishonor to have her virginal flesh, from which He Himself had assumed flesh, reduced to dust."³⁹

FAITH OF THE CHURCH

Once the mystery which is commemorated in this feast had been placed in its proper light, there were many teachers who, instead of dealing with the theological reasonings that show why it is fitting and right to believe the bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven, chose to focus their mind and attention on the faith of the Church itself, which is the Mystical Body of Christ without stain or spot⁴⁰ and is called by the Apostle "the pillar and ground of truth."⁴¹ Relying on this common faith, they considered the teaching opposed to the doctrine of Our Lady's Assumption as temerarious, if not heretical. Thus, like many others, St. Peter Canisius, after he had declared that the very word "Assumption" signifies the glorification not only of the soul, but also of the body, and that the Church has venerated and has solemnly celebrated this mystery of Mary's Assumption for many centuries, adds these words of warning: "This teaching has already been accepted for ages, it has been held as certain in the minds of the pious people, and it has been taught to the entire Church in such a way that those who deny that Mary's body has been assumed into heaven are not to be listened to patiently but are everywhere to be denounced as over-contentious or rash men, and as imbued with a spirit that is heretical rather than Catholic."⁴²

At the same time the great Suarez, professing in the field of Mariology the norm that "keeping in mind the standards of propriety, and when there is no contradiction or repugnance on the part of Scripture, the mysteries of grace which God has wrought in the Virgin must be measured not by the ordinary laws, but by the divine omnipotence,"⁴³ and supported by the common faith of the entire Church on the subject of the mystery of the Assumption, could conclude that this mystery was to be believed with the same firmness of assent as that given to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. Thus he already held that such truths could be defined.

All these proofs and considerations of the holy Fathers and the theologians are based upon the Sacred Writings as their ultimate foundation. These set the revered Mother of God as it were before our very eyes as most intimately joined to her divine Son and as always sharing His lot. Conse-

³⁸*Oeuvres de St. Francois de Sales*, Sermon for the Feast of the Assumption.

³⁹St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The Glories of Mary*, Part 2, d. 1.

⁴⁰Cf. Eph. 5: 27.

⁴¹1 Tim. 3: 15.

⁴²St. Peter Canisius, *De Maria Virgine*.

⁴³Suarez, *In tertiam partem D. Thomae*, q. 27, a. 2, disp. 3, sec. 5, n. 31.

quently it seems impossible to think of her, the one who conceived Christ, brought Him forth, gave Him milk, held Him in her arms, and fondled Him at her breast, as being apart from Him in body, even though not in soul. Since our Redeemer is the Son of Mary, He could not do otherwise, as the perfect observer of God's law, than to honor not only His eternal Father, but also His most beloved Mother. And since it was within His power to grant her this great honor, to preserve her from the corruption of the tomb, we must believe that He really acted in this way.

THE NEW EVE

We must remember especially that, since the second century, the Virgin Mary has been designated by the holy Fathers as the new Eve, who, although subject to the new Adam, is most intimately associated with Him in that struggle against the infernal foe which, as foretold in the *protoevangelium*,⁴⁴ finally resulted in that most complete victory over the sin and death which are always mentioned together in the writings of the Apostle of the Gentiles.⁴⁵ Consequently, just as the glorious resurrection of Christ was an essential part and the final sign of this victory, so that struggle which was common to the Blessed Virgin and her divine Son should be brought to a close by the glorification of her virginal body, for the same Apostle says: "when this mortal thing hath put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory."⁴⁶

Hence the revered Mother of God, from all eternity joined in a hidden way with Jesus Christ in one and the same decree of predestination,⁴⁷ immaculate in her conception, a most perfect virgin in her divine motherhood, the noble associate of the divine Redeemer who has won a complete triumph over sin and its consequences, was finally granted, as the supreme culmination of her privileges, that she should be preserved free from the corruption of the tomb and that, like her own Son, having overcome death, she might be taken up body and soul to the glory of heaven where, as Queen, she sits in splendor at the right hand of her Son, the immortal King of the Ages.⁴⁸

Since the Universal Church, within which dwells the Spirit of Truth Who infallibly directs it towards an ever more perfect knowledge of the revealed truths, has expressed its own belief many times over the course of the centuries, and since the Bishops of the entire world have almost unanimously petitioned that the truth of the bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven should be defined as a dogma of divine and Catholic faith —this truth which is based on the Sacred Writings, which is thoroughly rooted in the minds of the faithful, which has been approved in ecclesiastical worship from the most remote times, which is completely in harmony with the other revealed truths, and which has been expounded and explained

⁴⁴*Gen.* 3: 15.

⁴⁵Cf. *Rom.*, chapters 5 and 6; *I Cor.* 15: 21-26, 54-57.

⁴⁶*I Cor.* 15: 54.

⁴⁷The Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, *loc cit.*, p. 599.

⁴⁸Cf. *I Tim.* 1: 17.

magnificently in the work, the science, and the wisdom of the theologians—We believe that the moment appointed in the plan of divine providence for the solemn proclamation of this outstanding privilege of the Virgin Mary has already arrived.

We, who have placed our pontificate under the special patronage of the most holy Virgin, to whom We have had recourse so often in times of grave trouble, We who have consecrated the entire human race to her Immaculate Heart in public ceremonies, and who have time and time again experienced her powerful protection, are confident that this solemn proclamation and definition of the Assumption will contribute in no small way to the advantage of human society, since it redounds to the glory of the Most Blessed Trinity, to which the Blessed Mother of God was bound by such singular bonds. It is to be hoped that all the faithful will be stirred up to a stronger piety towards their heavenly Mother, and that the souls of all those who glory in the Christian name may be moved by the desire of sharing in the unity of Christ's Mystical Body and of increasing their love for her who in all things shows her motherly heart to the members of this august Body. And so we may hope that those who meditate upon the glorious example Mary offers us may be more and more convinced of the value of a human life entirely devoted to carrying out the heavenly Father's will and to bringing good to others. Thus, while the illusory teachings of materialism and the corruption of morals that follows from these teachings threaten to extinguish the light of virtue and to ruin the lives of men by exciting discord among them, in this magnificent way all may see clearly to what a lofty goal our bodies and souls are destined. Finally, it is our hope that belief in Mary's bodily Assumption into heaven will make our belief in our own resurrection stronger and render it more effective.

We rejoice greatly that this solemn event falls, according to the design of God's providence, during this Holy Year, so that We are able, while the great Jubilee is being observed, to adorn the brow of God's Virgin Mother with this new gem, and to leave a monument more enduring than bronze of our own most fervent love for the Mother of God.

For which reason, after We have poured forth prayers of supplication again and again to God, and have called upon the Spirit of Truth, for the glory of Almighty God Who has lavished His special affection upon the Virgin Mary, for the honor of her Son, the immortal King of the Ages and the Victor over sin and death, for the increase of the glory of that same august Mother, and for the joy and exultation of the entire Church; by the authority of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, We pronounce, declare and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.

Hence if anyone, which God forbid, should dare wilfully to deny or to call into doubt that which We have defined, let him know that he has fallen away completely from the divine and Catholic Faith.

In order that this, our definition of the bodily Assumption of the Virgin Mary into heaven, may be brought to the attention of the Universal Church, We desire that these, Our Apostolic Letters, should stand for perpetual remembrance, commanding that written copies of these, or even printed copies, signed by the hand of any public notary and furnished with the seal of a person constituted in ecclesiastical dignity, should, when they are tendered or shown, be accorded by all men the same reception they would give to these present Letters.

It is forbidden to any man to change a page of this, our declaration, pronouncement and definition or, by rash attempt, to oppose and counter it. If any man should presume to make such an attempt, let him know that he will incur the wrath of Almighty God and of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, in the year of the great Jubilee, 1950, on the first day of the month of November, on the Feast of All Saints, in the twelfth year of Our pontificate.

I Pius, Bishop of the Catholic Church,
have signed, so defining.

Homily on the Assumption

POPE PIUS XII

Official English translation of the allocution delivered by His Holiness to a Consistory of Cardinals and Bishops, October 30, 1950.

YOU well know the motive for which We have convoked this Sacred Consistory today. It is an event which will fill us, you and the whole Catholic world with unspeakable joy. On the first of November, the Feast of All Saints, the radiant brow of the Queen of Heaven and of the beloved Mother of God will be wreathed with new splendor, when, under divine inspiration and assistance, We shall solemnly define and decree Her bodily assumption into heaven.

With the authority which the Divine Redeemer transmitted to the Prince of the Apostles and to his successors, We have the intention of ordaining and defining what from the earliest days the

Church piously believes and honors, what the Holy Fathers have elaborated and brought to a clearer light through the centuries, and what the faithful of all classes everywhere have earnestly requested and implored by innumerable documents—namely, that Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, was assumed, body and soul, into the glory of heaven.

Before taking this resolution, We deemed it opportune, as you are aware, to entrust the study of the matter to experts. They, at our command, assembled all the requests which had been addressed to the Holy See on the matter, and examined them with all attention, so that there might emerge, in the clearest possible manner, what the

Sacred Magisterium and the entire Catholic Church held should be believed on this point of doctrine.

Furthermore, at our bidding, they studied with the greatest diligence all the attestations, indications and references in the common faith of the Church regarding the bodily assumption of the Blessed Virgin into heaven, whether in the concordant teaching of the Sacred Magisterium, or in the Sacred Scripture, or in the most ancient cult of the Church, as well as, lastly, in the writings of the Fathers and of the theologians and in the admirable harmony of this with other revealed truths.

We also sent letters to all the Bishops requesting them to state not only their own opinion, but also the thought and desire of the clergy and faithful.

In a wonderful and almost unanimous chorus, the voices of the pastors and of the faithful from every part of the world reached us professing the same faith and requesting the same things as supremely desired by all. We judged then that there was no reason for further delay, and we decided to proceed to the definition of the dogma.

If it is true that the entire Catholic Church cannot deceive or be deceived, the Divine Redeemer, Who is truth itself, having promised to the Apostles: "And behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world," it follows that this truth, firmly believed by the holy pastors and by the people, has been revealed by God, and can be defined by our supreme authority.

Nor is it without the will of Divine Providence that this happy event should coincide with the Holy Year, which is now drawing to a close. It seems that to all and especially to those who from all parts of the earth came to this beloved

city to purify their souls and renew their life in Christian practice, the Blessed Virgin Mary, resplendent on her throne as with a new light, stretched forth her maternal arms exhorting them to climb with courage the heights of virtue, so that, at the end of their earthly exile, they may come to the enjoyment of supreme happiness in their heavenly home.

May the sublime Mother of God take under her watchful protection the innumerable multitudes, whom, with unspeakable joy, We have seen giving proof of fervent faith and ardent piety as they throng not only the house of the Common Father and the immense Basilica of St. Peter, but also the square of St. Peter, and the adjoining streets, and may She obtain for them the heavenly lights and those gifts whereby they, illuminated and strengthened, may tend more readily to Christian perfection.

APATHETIC CHRISTIANS

Further, We nourish the great hope that the beloved Mother of God, crowned with new glory on earth, may contemplate with loving gaze and bind to herself those who languish in spiritual apathy, or slothfully dally in the snares of vice, or who, having lost the straight way of truth, do not recognize that sublime dignity of hers with which the privilege of her bodily assumption into heaven is strictly connected.

May our most benign Mother, assumed to the glory of heaven, lead to that divine light which descends only from on high the entire human race, which, in many places is still enveloped in the darkness of error, tormented by cruel chastisements and afflicted by grave dangers. May She obtain for them those supernal consolations which

restore and raise up the soul of man, even if prostrate with frightful sufferings.

May She obtain from her Divine Son that peace, which is based, as on a most solid foundation, on the tranquility of right order, on the just treatment of citizens and peoples, and on the liberty and dignity due to all, may finally return to shine among the nations and peoples at present divided to the common detriment.

May She above all defend, with her most powerful patronage, the Catholic Church, which in not a few parts of the world is either little known or is charged with false accusations and calumnies, or oppressed by unjust persecutions; and may She lead back to the unity of the Church all the erring and the wayward.

Let you, venerable brothers, and with you the entire Christian people, strive to obtain all these things from the heavenly Mother by fervent prayer.

But now, although, as We have said, the answers of the Bishops of all parts of the world have reached us on this matter, We desired nevertheless that

you manifest your opinion to this thronged and august assembly also.

Is it your good pleasure, venerable brothers, that We proclaim and define, as a dogma revealed by God, the bodily assumption of the Blessed Virgin into heaven?

[Having received the views of those present, expressed by the word "*placet*" or "*non placet*," the Pope continued.]

We greatly rejoice that all of you as with one thought and one voice assent to that which We ourselves think fitting and desire; because by this admirable agreement of the Cardinals and Bishops with the Roman Pontiff there emerges still more clearly what the Holy Church believes, teaches and desires in this matter.

You will nevertheless kindly continue to implore God with unceasing prayer, so that, by His favor and inspiration, that which all ardently await may happily come to pass; and may this event redound to the honor of the Holy Name of God, to the benefit of the Christian religion, to the glory of the Most Blessed Virgin, and may it be for all a new incentive to piety toward her.



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